SELECTED PROSE WRITINGS OF JOHN MILTON

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

SEVERAL English poets have written good prose, but Milton's alone has preserved any considerable power. Even his would have been forgotten but for its relation to his poetry Much of his poetry was directly or indirectly affected by his interest in public affairs, and his prose works are the explicit expression of that interest Many indeed of his arguments, and some of his conclusions, are such as can now have small hold on the minds of men It is a certain spirit breathing through these pamphlets, and their style when it fitly expresses this spirit, that can still interest us, and thus may be justified the extraction of characteristic passages from what were of course intended in the first place to be persuasive chains of reasoning Passages of imaginative eloquence are as subordinate to the argument in Milton as in Demosthenes, though they affect us very differently in the two writers, because, apart from his somewhat ineffective efforts to influence the changes proceeding in the state, Milton was primarily and ultimately a poet

He turned from poetry to write pamphlets on political and ecclesiastical matters because he lived

in a time of revolution, and with the main elements of that revolution he warmly sympathized But how far can the forces then at work be said to have found expression in his writings? He tells us that the principle for which he strove was the threefold principle of civil, domestic, and religious liberty. This is hardly the principle avowed by the leaders of the Parliaments of 1628 and 1629, or even of the Long Parliament Until the Independents became a power, Presbyterianism represented Puritanism, and was more intolerant than Anglicanism In the Grand Remonstrance it is the suppression of innovations that is spoken of as the object of the address In Church matters the Parliament 'hold it requisite 'that there should be throughout the whole realm 'conformity to that order which the laws enjoin 'according to the word of God' Though it was barely a century since the establishment of the Reformation in England, most Englishmen looked on returns to 'Popish practices' as innovations, and Parliament appealed to the conservative feeling of the English race against these, without misgiving as to the need of innovating to other purposes. Milton's 'Areopagitica,' written in 1644, is a demand for liberty for innovations to approve themselves if they can, though he too always regarded the Roman Church as rendering exceptional precautions needful

Apart from the relief of physical hardship, the bulk of the people are only then strongly interested in political liberties and in exercising control of the

administration when they feel these indispensable to the satisfaction of aspirations toward things that touch them more nearly than constitutional abstractions The English had been accustomed to leave administration to the Tudor princes, and even statesmen had then been willing to allow the crown unprecedented power in order to curb the aggressions of the nobles and of the Roman See At the end of Elizabeth's reign England was content, and no one could have foreseen the coming troubles It was to be expected indeed that the crown, whoever might be its wearer, would not easily be deprived of the exceptional power which had been entrusted to it for exceptional purposes, it was to be expected also that prescient men of affairs should see the necessity of such deprivation, and should strive to effect it But they would not have got the majority of the people to support them to the extent of waging resolute and bloody civil war, had not more been involved than political questions, even though the political questions included illegal taxation The people rose in arms because they were conscious, more or less distinctly, of a great national expansion and development, not in constitutional politics but in spiritual and intellectual life, a development which had produced the Shaksperian stage as well as the Puritan pulpit The one essential thing for an English king to do who wished to preserve his power, was to find some way of identifying himself with this expansive movement, as Elizabeth had done A wise and large-minded

attempt of the Stuart government was made was one by its nature singularly unsuited to the enforcement of any violent restriction, the Established Church of England Not only had it none of the awful far-reaching traditions which might be put forward to excuse the Church of the Holy Roman Empire, the Church of the Crusaders, in employing the secular arm against heretics, as against traitors to militant Christendom, but also its position at all times must be such as renders any forcible imposition of its claims unbefitting and perilous The sects may gain by attacking it, it can only lose by attacking them However active in its own work, it has to avoid aggression and even proselytizing Its strength is to sit still, to cherish its best elements, and to trust that its tolerant eclecticism, its noble offices and chaste ritual, its scholarly traditions, may win over to it those whose desire for religious rest has been wearied or outraged by the exaggerations of other forms of Christianity When it forsook the spirit of Hooker for that of Laud it made a false step which could only lead to painful defeat Presbyterianism, with still less excuse, made a like aggression, and with like result

To a certain extent therefore Milton is the spokesman of the bulk of his countrymen Priest and Presbyter alike he forbade in the name of England to fetter by force her free development, her realization of her chosen ideals for the time being But his own ideals were naturally such as the bulk of his countrymen could hardly as yet comprehend,

tempered by the tolerance of a great dramatic poet, tolerance born of wide sympathetic insight, and counting no human society wholly common or unclean He would hardly have spoken as Milton speaks of the average unaspiring lives of the majority

> Nor do I name of men the common rout
> That wandering loose about
> Grow up and perish as the summer fly,
> Heads without name, no more remembered

Shakspere expresses no dislike of hereditary kings, though he measures them unsparingly by their efficiency, and puts his assertion of the mystic sanctity of coronation into the mouth of a king of words not deeds, Richard II. But to Milton the extravagant exaltation of an accidental ruler, and all the falseness and sickly atmosphere of a court, seemed a defilement of the sacred trust of magistracy What he desired, as all profess to desire, was an aristocracy in the literal sense, a rule of the best and wisest, and he was not democratic enough to expect to obtain these by unqualified popular election In his 'Ready and Easy Way to Establish 'a Free Commonwealth' he proposes to have a Grand Council sitting in permanent rule, and does not hesitate to refer to the Venetian constitution as in many points a worthy model

The ultimate object of all political and social machinery is, in his view, to allow and foster the development of noble personalities, linked by all possible social charities, yet preserving the individuality so much cherished by his countrymen He

nence of intellect, he is not anxious to claim originality. As the Long Parliament had appealed to historic precedents, so Milton

> did but prompt the age to quit their clogs
> By the known rules of ancient liberty

This suits the English character; it loves indeed to cherish individuality, yet so that while each man shall do his work in his own way he shall endeavour to approve it by the sanction of some tradition, and by the mutual confidence inspired by recognition of a common thought and hope Milton is as much greater than M Renan as Dante than Politian, but we cannot imagine Milton announcing, as M. Renan announces of himself, that he was the first person to understand Jesus And further, it is everywhere apparent that Milton had the most generous faith in the mind as well as in the heart of man, that whenever he felt others fall short of some intellectual or moral level he had himself attained, he not only longed but believed that they might rise to it, and moreover might so rise only as a small step in the ascent to a far higher state, toward which his whole life was an aspiration.

An ideal perfection of man—a perfection developed through trial—was indeed constantly in his mind, and partly influenced his choice of the subjects of his great poems Mythological beliefs show the double tendency in man to imagine a golden age alike in the distant past and in the distant future Of this Milton avails himself when

eclipse, in his beloved country of the cause for which he strove, was enough to leave this tone in every voice of his old age It is the cruel waste, or seeming waste, of his labour, his eyesight, and his hope, in a great cause, which makes his personal utterances in his later poems so unspeakably pathetic, and heroic none the less We seem to hear Prometheus on Caucasus, or Elijah on Horeb, or Milton's own Abdiel or Samson, left alone among the enemies of God

It is to complete our conception of Milton's life and work and genius that some acquaintance with his prose works is needful; we may say also that without some such conception already derived from his poems we should hardly have read his prose In the first place, prose is uncongenial to him, as he says of himself, he has here but the use of his left hand This is not to be explained merely by saying that English prose was as yet hardly created, for after Bacon and Hooker, Milton might surely have hewn out a more perfect style for himself (as indeed now and again he does) if his heart had been in the work of writing prose as it was in the work of writing poetry It is not so much that he uses his left hand as that he is encumbered with ill-fitting armour, fettering the wings which his proper celestial panoply would have left free The art indeed of the best prose can be but as the art of clear and beautiful manuscript, enriched, it may be, by illuminations, the form is rather subordinate to the matter than incorporate with it, wherea

poetry is more nearly (though by no means strictly) analogous to painting and sculpture, and the form and subject matter are coordinate and mutually incorporate. Small indeed is the residue of prose from any pen that can be fully enjoyed two centuries, or even one, after it is written, prose is for an age, poetry for all time. But it is not merely the form, it is the matter of Milton's prose-writings that is in a sense uncongenial to him. The objects indeed for which he writes are objects deemed by him to be of the utmost importance. But they are of importance as needful but rudimentary preliminaries to the fulfilment of his true vocation. It is as though the architect of a Doric temple were compelled with his own hands wielding axe and spade to clear and level the ground for his building. Milton has to be his own forerunner, striving to prepare a highway in the wilderness. His absorbing passion was for beauty and virtue, his mission was to write poetry enshrining them, but he considered that for this end he was bound not only to 'make his life a poem,' that is, to develope it so far as he could toward his ideal, but also to do his best to free the society in which he lived from burdens and bondage fatal to its like development. Akin to Dante rather than to Goethe or even Shakspere, he was bent on realizing beauty in practical as well as contemplative, social as well as artistic life, in the state as well as in the individual. Resolutely as he contended in his pamphlets for liberty, he feels throughout a generous impatience of the

task laid on him, an impatience leading him sometimes into utterance entangled by the rush of thoughts too obvious to himself to induce him to use much art in their arrangement, sometimes more deplorably, as it were in a kind of maddened weariness, into retorting the ferocious bitterness of the controversialists of his day. It is when he gives us glimpses of the ideal with which he contrasts the deformities he has been struggling against with his uncouth armoury of biblical texts and learned precedents—it is then that his style both clears itself and rises into something worthy of his poetry in artistic power But these passages, noble and exalting as they are, make us feel, if they are anywhere prolonged, that they need both the limitations and the liberty of verse

In the Abbey Church of Tewkesbury are still heard the tones of the very organ on which Milton played before Cromwell at Hampton Court, and the picture thus evoked from the past symbolizes the true influence of poets such as Dante and Milton on the conduct of a commonwealth. But if they live, as these did, amidst 'a troubled sea of noises 'and harsh disputes,' such influence will not be felt till they are dead It was, after all, well for Milton's work and fame that all hope of national regeneration in his lifetime was taken away at the recall of the Stuart dynasty The tide of life swept away from the blind champion of liberty, leaving him still and solitary as a heroic statue among the drifted sands of the desert But it was then that

the holy Light arose upon him, and called forth his undying strain

"Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour!"

Such is Wordsworth's invocation to the man then more than a century dead, now more than two centuries, and I know not if any other poet has been invoked in like manner. We think of poets mostly as of men whose work was done once for all in leaving us the monuments of their art. That this poet should present himself differently to a reverer's mind points to some distinguishing quality in Milton. It is the quality of strenuous desire to help to create around him a condition of things approaching and helping on the fulfilment of his poetic ideal. That was a gigantic task, and the rough struggle involved was fitter for a giant than for a seraph. Yet though his wings were tarnished they regained a tenfold lustre. They would doubtless regain it once more if he had been plunged in our conflicts of to-day. But it is better that they be not recalled to earthly soilure; he speaks to us in his works, and it is enough.

Indeed we may almost doubt further whether his would be the most appropriate healing voice at this hour. Each age has its own especial task, or rather some especial shape in which is presented the one perpetual task of developing for the best the physical, intellectual, and moral capacities of man. The lot of the seventeenth century was mainly to assert liberty, that of the nineteenth to assert fraternity. When the enslavers had been struck

down, would Milton have felt enough sympathy with those who still remained enslaved by their own ignorance or grossness to have made him brook the wearisome toil of raising them? The Catholicism he helped to banish for ever from dominion in England spoke to the populace in more potent tones than are possible to aristocratic, individualistic Protestantism Eclectic Anglicanism repudiates the tinsel of Rome as Milton did, but cannot find a substitute for its attraction The humanizing influence of Catholicism was replaced in England by a philanthropy which grew up as much outside Churches as within them The growth of this new and wide philanthropy became, not less than the growth of physical science, a chief achievement of the eighteenth century, so often reproached, and in many ways justly, with materialism and corruption Politics had lost the idealizing influences of the Puritan Revolution Literature seemed to be engrossed in forming a prose style Gray, the best poet born in England between the birth of Milton and the birth of Wordsworth, was half stifled by the insensibility of the age Johnson's comparison of the sonnets of Milton to imperfectly carved cherry-stones marks the lowest point imaginable in criticism of verse Yet from about this point a revival in poetry begins, a return to nature, in the van of which came Cowper, though with somewhat uncertain steps Nor is verse the only vehicle of poetic thought This was the age of the rise of modern music, the age also of the most

passing from Milton's archangels to Wordsworth's peasants, poetry had been brought down, as philosophy by Socrates, from heaven to earth, but the kingdom of heaven is in both Man was not to climb the firmament, but a great sheet was let down thence to him with the mysterious bidding 'What God hath cleansed, that call not thou com-'mon' Perhaps we may be again entering on a prosaic age, though through somewhat different causes In the eighteenth century there was doubtless a reaction after the failure of ideal aspirations Now there is a depression from the growing sense of certain realities which seem to mar all hope of fulfilled ideals—chiefly the relentless struggle pervading Nature, and the grim contrasts of wasted wealth and wasting poverty Even those who are remote from both these, and enjoy a life worthy of free men, may seem to themselves to be raised to the capacity of such life by standing on a heap of crushed human bodies, victims of the material civilization which must be in some degree the basis of intellectual Milton knew little of this oppressing pity, if he were 'living at this hour' he would perhaps feel in bitter truth that 'an age 'too late' did at last indeed 'damp his intending 'wing'

Yet, after all, Wordsworth's regretful cry might be in a manner justified even now, for our sake if not for Milton's If there is any master-key to the perplexities of humanity, it will be ultimately revealed in some form or other by that 'plain heroic

words that speak of the dissolution of the world and all which it inherit,' though fully as majestic and resigned, have less of forward-looking hope in them than Milton's last utterance over the slain Samson, the chorus still rejoicing in

> new acquist
> Of true experience from this great event

Milton had battled for the aspirations and against the basenesses of man; Shakspere had comprehended both, but it was not his to strive or cry. He is our greatest, and has taught us most; yet we feel that to call on him as Wordsworth calls on Milton would strike a jarring and ineffectual note. So far as we can know his personality at all, it is that of one who, much as he loved his fellow men, deemed that he had played out his part among them. His work is done once for all, in many parts with obvious imperfections, yet as a whole producing an impression of universality resembling rather the abiding presence of Nature herself than any human personality whose law is to learn and to progress. His mild and magic rays are poured over the whole earthly scene with divine impartiality, over the castle and the cottage, the battle field and the village-green, the wild sea hurled against the cliff, and the still river winding through the plain. Looking thence to the genius of Milton we seem to see a pillar of clear fire mingled with smoke, throwing back strong shadows on the spurned earth, as it towers indignantly away; but if we follow it with unblenching eyes we find

OF REFORMATION IN ENGLAND

AND THE CAUSES THAT HITHERTO HAVE HINDERED IT IN TWO BOOKS WRITTEN TO A FRIEND 1641

OF REFORMATION IN ENGLAND

SIR,—Amidst those deep and retired thoughts, which, with every man Christianly instructed, ought to be most frequent, of God, and of his miraculous ways and works amongst men, and of our religion and works, to be performed to him, after the story of our Saviour Christ, suffering to the lowest bent of weakness in the flesh, and presently triumphing to the highest pitch of glory in the spirit, which drew up his body also, till we in both be united to him in the revelation of his kingdom, I do not know of anything more worthy to take up the whole passion of pity on the one side, and joy on the other, than to consider first the foul and sudden corruption, and then, after many a tedious age, the long deferred, but much more wonderful and happy reformation of the church in these latter days. Sad it is to think how that doctrine of the gospel, planted by teachers divinely inspired, and by them winnowed and sifted from the chaff of overdated ceremonies, and refined to such a spiritual height and temper of purity, and knowledge of the Creator, that the body, with all the circumstances of time and place, were purified

fort, or rather terror from them again, they knew not how to hide their slavish approach to God's behests, by them not understood, nor worthily received, but by cloaking their servile crouching to all religious presentments, sometimes lawful, sometimes idolatrous, under the name of humility, and terming the piebald frippery and ostentation of ceremonies, decency

' Then was baptism changed into a kind of exorcism, and water, sanctified by Christ's institute, thought little enough to wash off the original spot, without the scratch or cross impression of a priest's forefinger and that feast of free grace and adoption to which Christ invited his disciples to sit as brethren, and co-heirs of the happy covenant, which at that table was to be sealed to them, even that feast of love and heavenly-admitted fellowship, the seal of filial grace, became the subject of horror, and glouting adoration, pageanted about like a dreadful idol, which sometimes deceives well-meaning men, and beguiles them of their reward, by their voluntary humility, which indeed is fleshly pride, preferring a foolish sacrifice, and the rudiments of the world, as St Paul to the Colossians explaineth, before a savoury obedience to Christ's example Such was Peter's unseasonable humility, as then his knowledge was small, when Christ came to wash his feet, who at an impertinent time would needs strain courtesy with his master, and falling troublesomely upon the lowly, all-wise, and unexaminable intention of Christ, in

what he went with resolution to do, so provoked by his interruption the meek Lord, that he threatened to exclude him from his heavenly portion, unless he could be content to be less arrogant and stiffnecked in his humility

But to dwell no longer in characterizing the depravities of the church, and how they sprung, and how they took increase, when I recall to mind at last, after so many dark ages wherein the huge overshadowing train of error had almost swept all the stars out of the firmament of the church, how the bright and blissful Reformation (by divine power) struck through the black and settled night of ignorance and antichristian tyranny, methinks a sovereign and reviving joy must needs rush into the bosom of him that reads or hears, and the sweet odour of the returning gospel imbathe his soul with the fragrancy of heaven Then was *the sacred Bible sought out of the dusty corners* where profane falsehood and neglect had thrown it, the schools opened, divine and human learning raked out of the embers of forgotten tongues, the princes and cities trooping apace to the new-erected banner of salvation, the martyrs, with the unresistible might of weakness, shaking the powers of darkness, and scorning the fiery rage of the old red dragon

The pleasing pursuit of these thoughts hath ofttimes led me into a serious question and debatement with myself, *how it should come to pass that* England (having had this grace and honour from

God, to be the first that should set up a standard for the recovery of lost truth, and blow the first evangelic trumpet to the nations, holding up, as from a hill, the new lamp of saving light to all Christendom) should now be last and most unsettled in the enjoyment of that peace whereof she taught the way to others, although indeed our Wicklef's preaching, at which all the succeeding reformers more effectually lighted their tapers, was to his countrymen but a short blaze, soon damped and stifled by the pope and prelates for six or seven kings' reigns, yet methinks the precedency which God gave this island, to be first restorer of buried truth, should have been followed with more happy success, and sooner attained perfection, in which as yet we are amongst the last for, albeit in purity of doctrine we agree with our brethren, yet in discipline, which is the execution and applying of doctrine home, and laying the salve to the very orifice of the wound, yea, tenting and searching to the core, without which pulpit preaching is but shooting at rovers—in this we are no better than a schism from all the Reformation, and a sore scandal to them for while we hold ordination to belong only to bishops, as our prelates do, we must of necessity hold also their ministers to be no ministers, and shortly after their church to be no church not to speak of those senseless ceremonies which we only retain as a dangerous earnest of sliding back to Rome, and serving merely either as a mist to cover nakedness where

true grace is extinguished or as an interlude to set out the pomp of prelatism. Certainly it would be worth the while therefore and the pains to inquire more particularly what and how many the chief causes have been, that have still hindered our uniform consent to the rest of the churches abroad, at this time especially when the kingdom is in a good propensity thereto, and all men in prayers, in hopes, or in disputes, either for or against it.

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O, SIR, I do now feel myself inwrapt on the sudden into those mazes and labyrinths of dreadful and hideous thoughts, that which way to get out, or which way to end, I know not, unless I turn mine eyes, and with your help lift up my hands to that eternal and propitious throne, where nothing is readier than grace and refuge to the distresses of mortal suppliants and it were a shame to leave these serious thoughts less piously than the heathen were wont to conclude their graver discourses

Thou, therefore, that sittest in light and glory unapproachable, Parent of angels and men! next, thee I implore, omnipotent King, Redeemer of that lost remnant whose nature thou didst assume ineffable and everlasting Love! and thou, the third subsistence of divine infinitude, illumining Spirit the joy and solace of created things! one tri-personal Godhead! look upon this thy poor and almost spent and expiring church, leave her not thus a prey to these importunate wolves that wait and think long till they devour thy tender flock, these wild boars that have broke into thy vineyard

and left the print of their polluting hoofs on the souls of thy servants O let them not bring about their damned designs, that stand now at the entrance of the bottomless pit, expecting the watch-word to open and let out those dreadful locusts and scorpions, to reinvolve us in that pitchy cloud of infernal darkness, where we shall never more see the sun of thy truth again, never hope for the cheerful dawn, never more hear the bird of morning sing Be moved with pity at the afflicted state of this our shaken monarchy, that now lies labouring under her throes and struggling against the grudges of more dreaded calamities

O thou that after the impetuous rage of five bloody inundations, and the succeeding sword of intestine war, soaking the land in her own gore, didst pity the sad and ceaseless revolution of our swift and thick-coming sorrows, when we were quite breathless, of thy free grace didst motion peace, and terms of covenant with us, and having first well nigh freed us from antichristian thraldom didst build up this Britannic empire to a glorious and enviable height, with all her daughter-islands about her, stay us in this felicity, let not the obstinacy of our half-obedience and will-worship bring forth that viper of sedition that for these fourscore years hath been breeding to eat through the entrails of our peace, but let her cast her abortive spawn without the danger of this travailing and throbbing kingdom that we may still remember in our solemn thanksgivings how for us

the northern ocean even to the frozen Thule was scattered with the proud shipwrecks of the Spanish armada, and the very maw of hell ransacked and made to give up her concealed destruction, ere she could vent it in that horrible and damned blast.

O how much more glorious will those former deliverances appear when we shall know them not only to have saved us from greatest miseries past but to have reserved us for greatest happiness to come! Hitherto thou hast but freed us, and that not fully, from the unjust and tyrannous claim of thy foes, now unite us entirely and appropriate us to thyself, tie us everlastingly in willing homage to the prerogative of thy eternal throne.

And now we know, O thou our most certain hope and defence, that thine enemies have been consulting all the sorceries of the great Whore, and have joined their plots with that sad intelligencing tyrant that mischiefs the world with his mines of Ophir, and lies thirsting to revenge his naval ruins that have larded our seas but let them all take counsel together, and let it come to nought, let them decree, and do thou cancel it, let them gather themselves, and be scattered, let them embattle themselves, and be broken, let them embattle, and be broken, for thou art with us

Then, amidst the hymns and hallelujahs of saints, some one may perhaps be heard offering at high strains in new and lofty measure to sing and celebrate thy divine mercies and marvellous judgments in this land throughout all ages, where-

by this great and warlike nation, instructed and inured to the fervent and continual practice of truth and righteousness, and casting far from her the rags of her whole vices, may press on hard to that high and happy emulation to be found the soberest, wisest, and most Christian people at that day, when thou, the eternal and shortly expected King, shalt open the clouds to judge the several kingdoms of the world, and distributing national honours and rewards to religious and just commonwealths, shalt put an end to all earthly tyrannies, proclaiming thy universal and mild monarchy through heaven and earth, where they undoubtedly, that by their labours, counsels, and prayers, have been earnest for the common good of religion and their country, shall receive above the inferior orders of the blessed the regal addition of principalities, legions, and thrones into their glorious titles, and in supereminence of beatific vision, progressing the dateless and irrevoluble circle of eternity, shall clasp inseparable hands with joy and bliss in overmeasure for ever

But they contrary that by the impairing and diminution of the true faith, the distresses and servitude of their country, aspire to high dignity, rule, and promotion here, after a shameful end in this life, (which God grant them,) shall be thrown down eternally into the darkest and deepest gulf of hell, where, under the despiteful control, the trample and spurn of all the other damned, that in the anguish of their torture, shall have no other

ease than to exercise a raving and bestial tyranny over them as their slaves and negroes, they shall remain in that plight for ever, the basest, the lowermost, the most dejected, most underfoot and down-trodden vassals of perdition

THE REASON OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT

URGED AGAINST PRELATY
IN TWO BOOKS 1641

The following extracts are from the beginning and end of the Second Book

THE REASON OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

HOW happy were it for this frail and as it may be truly called mortal life of man, since all earthly things which have the name of good and convenient in our daily use are withal so cumbersome and full of trouble, if knowledge yet, which is the best and lightsomest possession of the mind, were, as the common saying is, no burden, and that what it wanted of being a load to any part of the body, it did not with a heavy advantage overlay upon the spirit! For not to speak of that knowledge that rests in the contemplation of natural causes and dimensions, which must needs be a lower wisdom, as the object is low, certain it is, that he who hath obtained in more than the scantiest measure to know anything distinctly of God, and of his true worship, and what is infallibly good and happy in the state of man's life, what in itself evil and miserable, though vulgarly not so esteemed; he that hath obtained to know this, the only high valuable wisdom indeed, remembering

and dispensers of treasure inestimable, without price, to them that have no peace, they find in the discharge of their commission, that they are made the greatest variance and offence, a very sword and fire both in house and city over the whole earth This is that which the sad prophet Jeremiah laments 'Wo is me, my mother, that thou hast 'born me a man of strife and contention!' And although divine inspiration must certainly have been sweet to those ancient prophets, yet the irksomeness of that truth which they brought was so unpleasant unto them that everywhere they call it a burden Yea, that mysterious book of revelation, which the great evangelist was bid to eat, as it had been some eye-brightening electuary of knowledge and foresight, though it were sweet in his mouth, and in the learning, it was bitter in his belly, bitter in the denouncing Nor was this hid from the wise poet Sophocles, who in that place of his tragedy where Tiresias is called to resolve king Œdipus in a matter which he knew would be grievous, brings him in bemoaning his lot, that he knew more than other men For surely to every good peaceable man, it must in nature needs be a hateful thing to be the displeaser and molester of thousands, much better would it like him doubtless to be the messenger of gladness and contentment, which is his chief intended business to all mankind, but that they resist and oppose their own true happiness But when God commands to take the trumpet, and blow a dolorous or a jarring blast, it lies

sion, and God have given me ability the while to reason against that man that should be the author of so foul a deed; or should she, by blessing from above on the industry and courage of faithful men, change this her distracted estate into better days, without the least furtherance or contribution of those few talents which God at that present had lent me, I foresee what stories I should hear within myself, all my life after, of discourage and reproach 'Timorous and ungrateful, the church of God is now 'again at the foot of her insulting enemies, and thou 'bewailest What matters it for thee or thy be-'wailing? When time was, thou couldst not find 'a syllable of all that thou hast read or studied to 'utter in her behalf Yet ease and leisure was given 'thee for thy retired thoughts, out of the sweat of 'other men Thou hast the diligence, the parts, 'the language of a man, if a vain subject were to be 'adorned or beautified, but when the cause of God 'and his church was to be pleaded, for which pur-'pose that tongue was given thee which thou hast, 'God listened if he could hear thy voice among his 'zealous servants, but thou wert dumb as a beast, 'from henceforward be that which thine own brutish 'silence hath made thee' Or else I should have heard on the other ear 'Slothful, and ever to be set 'light by, the church hath now overcome her late 'distresses after unwearied labours of many her true 'servants that stood up in her defence, thou also 'wouldst take upon thee to share amongst them of 'their joy, but wherefore thou? Where canst thou

pleasing humour of vain-glory hath incited me to contest with men of high estimation, now while green years are upon my head, from this needless surmisal I shall hope to dissuade the intelligent and equal auditor, if I can but say successfully that which in this exigent behoves me; although I would be heard only, if it might be, by the elegant and learned reader, to whom principally for a while I shall beg leave I may address myself To him it will be no new thing, though I tell him that if I hunted after praise by the ostentation of wit and learning, I should not write thus out of mine own season when I have neither yet completed to my mind the full circle of my private studies, although I complain not of any insufficiency to the matter in hand, or were I ready to my wishes, it were a folly to commit anything elaborately composed to the careless and interrupted listening of these tumultuous times Next, if I were wise only to my own ends, I would certainly take such a subject as of itself might catch applause, whereas this hath all the disadvantages on the contrary, and such a subject as the publishing whereof might be delayed at pleasure, and time enough to pencil it over with all the curious touches of art, even to the perfection of a faultless picture, whenas in this argument the not deferring is of great moment to the good speeding, that if solidity have leisure to do her office, art cannot have much Lastly, I should not choose this manner of writing, wherein knowing myself inferior to myself, led by the genial power of

acceptance above what was looked for, and other things, which I had shifted in scarcity of books and conveniences to patch up amongst them, were received with written encomiums, which the Italian is not forward to bestow on men of this side the Alps, I began thus far to assent both to them and divers of my friends here at home, and not less to an inward prompting which now grew daily upon me, that by labour and intent study, (which I take to be my portion in this life,) joined with the strong propensity of nature, I might perhaps leave something so written to aftertimes as they should not willingly let it die These thoughts at once possessed me, and these other, that if I were certain to write as men buy leases, for three lives and downward, there ought no regard be sooner had than to God's glory, by the honour and instruction of my country For which cause, and not only for that I knew it would be hard to arrive at the second rank among the Latins, I applied myself to that resolution which Ariosto followed against the persuasions of Bembo, to fix all the industry and art I could unite to the adorning of my native tongue, not to make verbal curiosities the end, (that were a toilsome vanity,) but to be an interpreter and relater of the best and sagest things among mine own citizens throughout this island in the mother dialect. That what the greatest and choicest wits of Athens, Rome, or modern Italy, and those Hebrews of old did for their country, I, in my proportion, with this over and above of being a

and inclination, to present the like offer in our own ancient stories, or whether those dramatic constitutions, wherein Sophocles and Euripides reign, shall be found more doctrinal and exemplary to a nation The scripture also affords us a divine pastoral drama in the Song of Solomon, consisting of two persons and a double chorus, as Origen rightly judges And the Apocalypse of St John is the majestic image of a high and stately tragedy, shutting up and intermingling her solemn scenes and acts with a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies and this my opinion the grave authority of Pareus, commenting that book, is sufficient to confirm Or if occasion shall lead, to imitate those magnific odes and hymns, wherein Pindarus and Callimachus are in most things worthy, some others in their frame judicious, in their matter most and end faulty But those frequent songs throughout the law and prophets beyond all these, not in their divine argument alone, but in the very critical art of composition, may be easily made appear over all the kinds of lyric poesy to be incomparable These abilities wheresoever they be found, are the inspired gift of God, rarely bestowed, but yet to some (though most abuse) in every nation, and are of power, beside the office of a pulpit, to imbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and public civility, to allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune, to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns the throne and equipage

decent to each one, do for the most part lay up vicious principles in sweet pills to be swallowed down, and make the taste of virtuous documents harsh and sour But because the spirit of man cannot demean itself lively in this body without some recreating intermission of labour and serious things, it were happy for the commonwealth if our magistrates, as in those famous governments of old, would take into their care not only the deciding of our contentious law-cases and brawls but the managing of our public sports and festival pastimes, that they might be, not such as were authorized a while since, the provocations of drunkenness and lust, but such as may inure and harden our bodies by martial exercises to all warlike skill and performance, and may civilize, adorn, and make discreet our minds by the learned and affable meeting of frequent academies, and the procurement of wise and artful recitations, sweetened with eloquent and graceful enticements to the love and practice of justice, temperance, and fortitude, instructing and bettering the nation at all opportunities, that the call of wisdom and virtue may be heard everywhere, as Solomon saith 'She crieth without, she uttereth her voice 'in the streets, in the top of high places, in the chief 'concourse, and in the openings of the gates' Whether this may not be, not only in pulpits, but after another persuasive method, at set and solemn paneguries, in theatres, porches, or what other place or way may win most upon the people to

and generous arts and affairs, till which in some measure be compassed, at mine own peril and cost, I refuse not to sustain this expectation from as many as are not loth to hazard so much credulity upon the best pledges that I can give them Although it nothing content me to have disclosed thus much beforehand, but that I trust hereby to make it manifest with what small willingness I endure to interrupt the pursuit of no less hopes than these, and leave a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to embark in a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes, put from beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies, to come into the dim reflection of hollow antiquities sold by the seeming bulk, and there be fain to club quotations with men whose learning and belief lies in marginal stuffings, who, when they have, like good sumpters, laid ye down their horse-loads of citations and fathers at your door, with a rhapsody of who and who were bishops here or there, ye may take off their packsaddles, their day's work is done, and episcopacy, as they think, stoutly vindicated Let any gentle apprehension, that can distinguish learned pains from unlearned drudgery imagine what pleasure or profoundness can be in this, or what honour to deal against such adversaries But were it the meanest under-service, if God by his secretary conscience enjoin it, it were sad for me if I should draw back, for me especially, now when all men offer their aid to help,

THE CONCLUSION

The Mischief that Prelaty does in the State

I ADD one thing more to those great ones that are so fond of prelaty: this is certain, that the gospel being the hidden might of Christ, as hath been heard, that ever a victorious power joined with it, like him in the Revelation that went forth on the white horse with his bow and his crown, conquering and to conquer. If we let the angel of the gospel ride on his own way, he does his proper business, conquering the high thoughts and the proud reasonings of the flesh, and brings them under to give obedience to Christ with the salvation of many souls. But if ye turn him out of his road, and in a manner force him to express his irresistible power by a doctrine of carnal might, as prelaty is, he will use that fleshly strength which ye put into his hands to subdue your spirits by a servile and blind superstition, and that again shall hold such dominion over your captive minds, as returning with an insatiate greediness and force upon your worldly wealth and power, wherewith to deck and magnify herself and her false worships, he shall spoil and havoc your

so will they yet do their best to repeal and erase every line and clause of both our great charters. Nor is this only what they will do, but what they hold as the main reason and mystery of their advancement that they must do; be the prince never so just and equal to his subjects, yet such are their malicious and depraved eyes, that they so look on him and so understand him as if he required no other gratitude or piece of service from them than this And indeed they stand so opportunely for the disturbing or the destroying of a state, being a knot of creatures whose dignities, means, and preferments have no foundation in the gospel, as they themselves acknowledge, but only in the prince's favour, and to continue so long to them, as by pleasing him they shall deserve whence it must needs be they should bend all their intentions and services to no other ends but to his, that if it should happen that a tyrant (God turn such a scourge from us to our enemies) should come to grasp the sceptre, here were his spearmen and his lances, here were his firelocks ready, he should need no other pretorian band nor pensionary than these, if they could once with their perfidious preachments awe the people For although the prelates in time of popery were sometimes friendly enough to Magna Charta, it was because they stood upon their own bottom, without their main dependance on the royal nod but now being well acquainted that the protestant religion, if she will reform herself rightly by the scriptures, must

not in time, with the sovereign treacle of sound doctrine, provide to fortify their hearts against her hierarchy The service of God, who is truth, her liturgy confesses to be perfect freedom, but her works and her opinions declare that the service of prelaty is perfect slavery, and by consequence perfect falsehood Which makes me wonder much that many of the gentry, studious men as I hear, should engage themselves to write and speak publicly in her defence, but that I believe their honest and ingenuous natures coming to the universities to store themselves with good and solid learning, and there unfortunately fed with nothing else but the scragged and thorny lectures of monkish and miserable sophistry, were sent home again with such a scholastic bur in their throats as hath stopped and hindered all true and generous philosophy from entering, cracked their voices for ever with metaphysical gargarisms, and hath made them admire a sort of formal outside men prelatically addicted, whose unchastened and unwrought minds were never yet initiated or subdued under the true love of religion or moral virtue, which two are the best and greatest points of learning, but either slightly trained up in a kind of hypocritical and hackney course of literature to get their living by, and dazzle the ignorant, or else fondly over studied in useless controversies, except those which they use with all the specious and delusive subtlety they are able, to defend their prelatical Sparta, having a gospel and church government set before their

themselves with such a brazen forehead the outrageous desire of filthy lucre Which the prelates make so little conscience of, that they are ready to fight and, if it lay in their power, to massacre all good Christians under the names of horrible schismatics, for only finding fault with their temporal dignities, their unconscionable wealth and revenues, their cruel authority over their brethren that labour in the word while they snore in their luxurious excess openly proclaiming themselves now in the sight of all men to be those which for a while they sought to cover under sheep's clothing, ravenous and savage wolves, threatening inroads and bloody incursions upon the flock of Christ, which they took upon them to feed, but now claim to devour as their prey More like that huge dragon of Egypt, breathing out waste and desolation to the land, unless he were daily fattened with virgin's blood Him our old patron St George by his matchless valour slew, as the prelate of the garter that reads his collect can tell And if our princes and knights will imitate the fame of that old champion, as by their order of knighthood solemnly taken they vow, far be it that they should uphold and side with this English dragon, but rather to do as indeed their oaths bind them, they should make it their knightly adventure to pursue and vanquish this mighty sail-winged monster, that menaces to swallow up the land, unless her bottomless gorge may be satisfied with the blood of the king's daughter, the church, and may, as

practice of temperance and sobriety, without the strong drink of injurious and excessive desires, grows up to a noble strength and perfection with those his illustrious and sunny locks, the laws, waving and curling about his godlike shoulders And while he keeps them about him undiminished and unshorn, he may with the jawbone of an ass, that is, with the word of his meanest officer, suppress and put to confusion thousands of those that rise against his just power But laying down his head among the strumpet flatteries of prelates, while he sleeps and thinks no harm, they wickedly shaving off all those bright and weighty tresses of his law, and just prerogatives, which were his ornament and strength, deliver him over to indirect and violent counsels, which, as those Philistines, put out the fair and far-sighted eyes of his natural discerning, and make him grind in the prisonhouse of their sinister ends and practices upon him till he, knowing this prelatical rasor to have bereft him of his wonted might, nourish again his puissant hair, the golden beams of law and right, and they sternly shook, thunder with ruin upon the heads of those his evil counsellors, but not without great affliction to himself This is the sum of their loyal service to kings, yet these are the men that still cry, The king, the king, the Lord's anointed! We grant it, and wonder how they came to light upon anything so true, and wonder more, if kings be the Lord's anointed, how they dare thus oil over and besmear so holy an

destroy the free use of them to all posterity For the which, and for all their former misdeeds, whereof this book and many volumes more cannot contain the moiety, I shall move ye, lords, in the behalf I dare say of many thousand good Christians, to let your justice and speedy sentence pass against this great malefactor, prelaty And yet in the midst of rigour I would beseech ye to think of mercy; and such a mercy, (I fear I shall overshoot with a desire to save this falling prelaty,) such a mercy (if I may venture to say it) as may exceed that which for only ten righteous persons would have saved Sodom Not that I dare advise ye to contend with God, whether he or you shall be more merciful, but in your wise esteems to balance the offences of those peccant cities with these enormous riots of ungodly misrule that prelaty hath wrought both in the church of Christ and in the state of this kingdom And if ye think ye may with a pious presumption strive to go beyond God in mercy, I shall not be one now that would dissuade ye Though God for less than ten just persons would not spare Sodom, yet if you can find, after due search, but only one good thing in prelaty, either to religion or civil government, to king or parliament, to prince or people, to law, liberty, wealth, or learning, spare her, let her live, let her spread among ye, till with her shadow all your dignities and honours and all the glory of the land be darkened and obscured But on the contrary, if she be found to be malignant, hostile, destructive

ANIMADVERSIONS UPON THE REMONSTRANT'S DEFENCE AGAINST SMECTYMNUUS

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ANIMADVERSIONS UPON THE REMONSTRANT'S DEFENCE AGAINST SMECTYMNUUS

IF you require a further answer, it will not misbecome a Christian to be either more magnanimous or more devout than Scipio was, who, instead of other answer to the frivolous accusations of Petilius the tribune, "This day, Romans, (saith he,) I fought with Hannibal prosperously, let us all go and thank the gods that gave us so great a victory" in like manner will we now say, not caring otherwise to answer this unprotestantlike objection In this age, Britons, God hath reformed his church after many hundred years of popish corruption, in this age he hath freed us from the intolerable yoke of prelates and papal discipline; in this age he hath renewed our protestation against all those yet remaining dregs of superstition Let us all go, every true protested Briton, throughout the three kingdoms, and render thanks to God the Father of light and Fountain of heavenly grace, and to his Son Christ our Lord, leaving this Remonstrant and his adherents to their own designs; and let us recount even here without delay the

patience and long-suffering that God hath used toward our blindness and hardness time after time. For he being equally near to his whole creation of mankind, and of free power to turn his beneficent and fatherly regard to what region or kingdom he pleases, hath yet ever had this island under the special indulgent eye of his providence; and pitying us the first of all other nations, after he had decreed to purify and renew his church that lay wallowing in idolatrous pollutions, sent first to us a healing messenger to touch softly our sores and carry a gentle hand over our wounds he knocked once and twice, and came again opening our drowsy eyelids leisurely by that glimmering light which Wicklef and his followers dispersed, and still taking off by degrees the inveterate scales from our nigh perished sight, purged also our deaf ears, and prepared them to attend his second warning trumpet in our grandsires' days How else could they have been able to have received the sudden assault of his reforming Spirit, warring against human principles, and carnal sense, the pride of flesh, that still cried up antiquity, custom, canons, councils, and laws, and cried down the truth for novelty, schism, profaneness, and sacrilege? whereas we that have lived so long in abundant light, besides the sunny reflection of all the neighbouring churches, have yet our hearts rivetted with those old opinions, and so obstructed and benumbed with the same fleshly reasonings, which in our forefathers soon melted and gave way, against the morning beam of

reformation If God had left undone this whole work, so contrary to flesh and blood, till these times, how should we have yielded to his heavenly call, had we been taken, as they were, in the starkness of our ignorance, that yet, after all these spiritual preparatives and purgations, have our earthly apprehensions so clammed and furred with the old leaven? O if we freeze at noon after their early thaw, let us fear lest the sun for ever hide himself and turn his orient steps from our ingrateful horizon, justly condemned to be eternally benighted Which dreadful judgment, O thou the ever-begotten Light and perfect Image of the Father! intercede, may never come upon us, as we trust thou hast, for thou hast opened our difficult and sad times, and given us an unexpected breathing after our long oppressions thou hast done justice upon those that tyrannized over us, while some men wavered and admired a vain shadow of wisdom in a tongue nothing slow to utter guile, though thou hast taught us to admire only that which is good, and to count that only praiseworthy which is grounded upon thy divine precepts Thou hast discovered the plots, and frustrated the hopes, of all the wicked in the land, and put to shame the persecutors of thy church thou hast made our false prophets to be found a lie in the sight of all the people, and chased them with sudden confusion and amazement before the redoubled brightness of thy descending cloud, that now covers thy tabernacle. Who is there that cannot trace thee now in

thy beamy walk through the midst of thy sanctuary, amid those golden candlesticks, which have long suffered a dimness among us through the violence of those that had seized them, and were more taken with the mention of their gold than of their starry light, teaching the doctrine of Balaam, to cast a stumbling-block before thy servants, commanding them to eat things sacrificed to idols, and forcing them to fornification? Come therefore, O thou that hast the seven stars in thy right hand, appoint thy chosen priests according to their orders and courses of old, to minister before thee, and duly to press and pour out the consecrated oil into thy holy and ever-burning lamps Thou hast sent out the spirit of prayer upon thy servants over all the land to this effect, and stirred up their vows as the sound of many waters about thy throne Every one can say that now certainly thou hast visited this land, and hast not forgotten the utmost corners of the earth, in a time when men had thought that thou wast gone up from us to the furthest end of the heavens, and hadst left to do marvellously among the sons of these last ages O perfect, and accomplish thy glorious acts! for men may leave their works unfinished, but thou art a God, thy nature is perfection shouldst thou bring us thus far onward from Egypt to destroy us in this wilderness, though we deserve, yet thy great name would suffer in the rejoicing of thine enemies, and the deluded hope of all thy servants When thou hast settled peace in the church, and righteous judgment

in the kingdom, then shall all thy saints address their voices of joy and triumph to thee, standing on the shore of that Red Sea into which our enemies had almost driven us And he that now for haste snatches up a plain ungarnished present as a thank-offering to thee, which could not be deferred in regard of thy so many late deliverances wrought for us one upon another, may then perhaps take up a harp, and sing thee an elaborate song to generations In that day it shall no more be said as in scorn, this or that was never held so till this present age, when men have better learnt that the times and seasons pass along under thy feet to go and come at thy bidding and as thou didst dignify our fathers' days with many revelations above all the foregoing ages since thou tookest the flesh, so thou canst vouchsafe to us (though unworthy) as large a portion of thy Spirit as thou pleasest for who shall prejudice thy all-governing will? seeing the power of thy grace is not passed away with the primitive times, as fond and faithless men imagine, but thy kingdom is now at hand, and thou standing at the door Come forth out of thy royal chambers, O Prince of all the kings of the earth! put on the visible robes of thy imperial majesty, take up that unlimited sceptre which thy Almighty Father hath bequeathed thee, for now the voice of thy bride calls thee, and all creatures sigh to be renewed

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This is the root of all our mischief, that which they allege for the encouragement of their studies

should be cut away forewith as the very bait of pride and ambition, the very garbage that draws together all the fowls of prey and ravine in the land to come and gorge upon the church. How can it be but ever unhappy to the church of England, while she shall think to entice men to the pure service of God by the same means that were used to tempt our Saviour to the service of the devil, by laying before him honour and preferment? Fit professors indeed are they like to be to teach others that godliness with content is great gain, whenas their godliness of teaching had not been but for worldly gain The heathen philosophers thought that virtue was for its own sake inestimable, and the greatest gain of a teacher to make a soul virtuous, so Xenophon writes to Socrates, who never bargained with any for teaching them, he feared not lest those who had received so high a benefit from him would not of their own free will return him all possible thanks Was moral virtue so lovely and so alluring, and heathen men so enamoured of her as to teach and study her with greatest neglect and contempt of worldly profit and advancement? And is Christian piety so homely and so unpleasant, and Christian men so cloyed with her, as that none will study and teach her but for lucre and preferment? O stale grown piety! O gospel rated as cheap as thy Master, at thirty pence, and not worth the study unless thou canst buy those that will sell thee! O race of Capernaitans, senseless of divine

doctrine, and capable only of loaves and belly-cheer! But they will grant, perhaps, piety may thrive, but learning will decay I would fain ask these men at whose hands they seek inferior things, as wealth, honour, their dainty fare, their lofty houses? No doubt but they will soon answer, that all these things they seek at God's hands. Do they think then that all these meaner and superfluous things come from God, and the divine gift of learning from the den of Plutus, or the cave of Mammon? Certainly never any clear spirit nursed up from brighter influences, with a soul enlarged to the dimensions of spacious art and high knowledge, ever entered there but with scorn, and thought it ever foul disdain to make pelf or ambition the reward of his studies; it being the greatest honour, the greatest fruit and proficiency of learned studies to despise these things Not liberal science but illiberal must that needs be that mounts in contemplation merely for money And what would it avail us to have a hireling clergy, though never so learned? For such can have neither true wisdom nor grace, and then in vain do men trust in learning where these be wanting If in less noble and almost mechanic arts, according to the definitions of those authors, he is not esteemed to deserve the name of a complete architect, an excellent painter, or the like, that bears not a generous mind above the peasantly regard of wages and hire, much more must we think him a most imperfect and incomplete divine

who is so far from being a contemner of filthy lucre that his whole divinity is moulded and bred up in the beggarly and brutish hopes of a fat prebendary, deanery, or bishopric, which poor and low-pitched desires, if they do but mix with those other heavenly intentions that draw a man to this study, it is justly expected that they should bring forth a baseborn issue of divinity, like that of those imperfect and putrid creatures that receive a crawling life from two most unlike procreants, the sun and mud And in matters of religion, there is not anything more intolerable than a learned fool, or a learned hypocrite the one is ever cooped up at his empty speculations, a sot, an idiot for any use that mankind can make of him, or else sowing the world with nice and idle questions, and with much toil and difficulty wading to his auditors up to the eyebrows in deep shallows that wet not the instep a plain unlearned man that lives well by that light which he has, is better and wiser and edifies others more towards a godly and happy life than he The other is still using his sophisticated arts, and bending all his studies how to make his insatiate avarice and ambition seem pious and orthodoxal, by painting his lewd and deceitful principles with a smooth and glossy varnish in a doctrinal way, to bring about his wickedest purposes Instead of the great harm therefore that these men fear upon the dissolving of prelates, what an ease and happiness will it be to us when tempting rewards are taken away, that the cunningest and most dangerous mercenaries

will cease of themselves to frequent the fold, whom otherwise scarce all the prayers of the faithful could have kept back from devouring the flock! But a true pastor of Christ's sending hath this especial mark, that for greatest labours and greatest merits in the church he requires either nothing, if he could so subsist, or a very common and reasonable supply of human necessaries We cannot therefore do better than to leave this care of ours to God he can easily send labourers into his harvest, that shall not cry, Give, give, but be contented with a moderate and beseeming allowance, nor will he suffer true learning to be wanting where true grace and our obedience to him abounds for if he give us to know him aright, and to practise this our knowledge in right-established discipline, how much more will he replenish us with all abilities in tongues and arts that may conduce to his glory and our good! He can stir up rich fathers to bestow exquisite education upon their children, and so dedicate them to the service of the gospel, he can make the sons of nobles his ministers, and princes to be his Nazarites, for certainly there is no employment more honourable, more worthy to take up a great spirit, more requiring a generous and free nurture, than to be the messenger and herald of heavenly truth from God to man, and by the faithful work of holy doctrine to procreate a number of faithful men, making a kind of creation like to God's, by infusing his spirit and likeness into them, to their salvation, as God did into him, arising to what climate soever he

AN APOLOGY FOR SMECTYMNUUS

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AN APOLOGY FOR SMECTYMNUUS.

WITH me it fares now as with him whose outward garment hath been injured and ill-bedighted, for having no other shift, what help but to turn the inside outward, especially if the lining be of the same, or, as it is sometimes, much better? So if my name and outward demeanour be not evident enough to defend me, I must make trial if the discovery of my inmost thoughts can wherein of two purposes, both honest and both sincere, the one perhaps I shall not miss, although I fail to gain belief with others, of being such as my perpetual thoughts shall here disclose me, I may yet not fail of success in persuading some to be such really themselves, as they cannot believe me to be more than what I feign

I had my time, readers, as others have, who have good learning bestowed upon them, to be sent to those places where, the opinion was, it might be soonest attained, and as the manner is, was not unstudied in those authors which are most commended Whereof some were grave orators and historians, whose matter methought I loved indeed, but as my age then was, so I understood

times preferred: whereof not to be sensible when good and fair in one person meet, argues both a gross and shallow judgment and withal an ungentle and swainish breast. For by the firm settling of these persuasions I became, to my best memory, so much a proficient that if I found those authors anywhere speaking unworthy things of themselves, or unchaste of those names which before they had extolled, this effect it wrought with me; from that time forward their art I still applauded, but the men I deplored, and above them all preferred the two famous renowners of Beatrice and Laura, who never write but honour of them to whom they devote their verse, displaying sublime and pure thoughts, without transgression. And long it was not after, when I was confirmed in this opinion, that he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things ought himself to be a true poem that is, a composition and pattern of the best and honourablest things; not presuming to sing high praises of heroic men, or famous cities, unless he have in himself the experience and the practice of all that which is praiseworthy These reasonings, together with a certain niceness of nature, an honest haughtiness, and self-esteem either of what I was, or what I might be, (which let envy call pride,) and lastly that modesty, whereof, though not in the title-page, yet here I may be excused to make some beseeming profession; all these uniting the supply of their natural aid together, kept me

fast observation of that virtue which abhors the society of bordelloes

Thus, from the laureat fraternity of poets, riper years and the ceaseless round of study and reading led me to the shady spaces of philosophy, but chiefly to the divine volumes of Plato, and his equal Xenophon where, if I should tell ye what I learnt of chastity and love, I mean that which is truly so, whose charming cup is only virtue, which she bears in her hand to those who are worthy, (the rest are cheated with a thick intoxicating potion, which a certain sorceress, the abuser of love's name, carries about,) and how the first and chiefest office of love begins and ends in the soul, producing those happy twins of her divine generation, knowledge and virtue, with such abstracted sublimities as these, it might be worth your listening, readers, as I may one day hope to have ye in a still time, when there shall be no chiding, not in these noises, the adversary, as ye know, barking at the door, or searching for me at the bordelloes, where it may be he has lost himself, and raps up without pity the sage and rheumatic old prelatesse, with all her young Corinthian laity, to inquire for such a one

Last of all, not in time, but as perfection is last, that care was ever had of me, with my earliest capacity, not to be negligently trained in the precepts of the Christian religion. this that I have hitherto related hath been to shew that though Christianity had been but slightly taught me, yet

a certain reservedness of natural disposition, and moral discipline, learnt out of the noblest philosophy, was enough to keep me in disdain of far less incontinences than this of the bordello. But, having had the doctrine of holy scripture unfolding those chaste and high mysteries with timeliest care infused, that 'the body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body,' thus also I argued to myself, that if unchastity in a woman, whom St. Paul terms the glory of man, be such a scandal and dishonour, then certainly in a man, who is both the image and glory of God, it must, though commonly not so thought, be much more deflowering and dishonourable, in that he sins both against his own body, which is the perfecter sex, and his own glory, which is in the woman; and, that which is worst, against the image and glory of God, which is in himself. Nor did I slumber over that place expressing such high rewards of ever accompanying the Lamb, with those celestial songs to others inapprehensible, but not to those who were not defiled with women, which doubtless means fornication; for marriage must not be called a defilement.

Thus large I have purposely been, that if I have been justly taxed with this crime, it may come upon me, after all this my confession, with a tenfold shame: but if I have hitherto deserved no such opprobrious word, or suspicion, I may hereby engage myself now openly to the faithful observation of what I have professed.

But to the end that nothing may be omitted which may farther satisfy any conscionable man, who notwithstanding what I could explain before the Animadversions, remains yet unsatisfied concerning that way of writing which I there defended, but this confuter, whom it pinches, utterly disapproves, I shall assay once again, and perhaps with more success If therefore the question were in oratory, whether a vehement vein throwing out indignation or scorn upon an object that merits it, were among the aptest *ideas* of speech to be allowed, it were my work, and that an easy one, to make it clear both by the rules of best rhetoricians and the famousest examples of the Greek and Roman orations But since the religion of it is disputed, and not the art, I shall make use only of such reasons and authorities as religion cannot except against It will be harder to gainsay than for me to evince that in the teaching of men diversely tempered different ways are to be tried The Baptist, we know, was a strict man, remarkable for austerity and set order of life Our Saviour, who had all gifts in him, was Lord to express his indoctrinating power in what sort him best seemed, sometimes by a mild and familiar converse, sometimes with plain and impartial home speaking, regardless of those whom the auditors might think he should have had in more respect, otherwhile, with bitter and ireful rebukes, if not teaching, yet leaving excuseless those his wilful impugners.

drawn with two blazing meteors, figured like beasts, but of a higher breed than any the zodiac yields, resembling two of those four which Ezekiel and St John saw, the one visaged like a lion, to express power, high authority, and indignation, the other of countenance like a man, to cast derision and scorn upon perverse and fraudulent seducers with these the invincible warrior, Zeal, shaking loosely the slack reins, drives over the heads of scarlet prelates and such as are insolent to maintain traditions, bruising their stiff necks under his flaming wheels.

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THE DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE OF DIVORCE

RESTORED, TO THE GOOD OF BOTH SEXES, FROM THE BONDAGE OF CANON LAW AND OTHER MISTAKES TO THE TRUE MEANING OF SCRIPTURE IN THE LAW AND GOSPEL COMPARED

WHEREIN ALSO ARE SET DOWN THE BAD CONSEQUENCES OF ABOLISHING, OR CONDEMNING AS SIN, THAT WHICH THE LAW OF GOD ALLOWS AND CHRIST ABOLISHED NOT IN TWO BOOKS TO THE PARLIAMENT OF ENGLAND WITH THE ASSEMBLY 1644

THE DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE OF DIVORCE

FOURTHLY, Marriage is a covenant, the very being whereof consists not in a forced cohabitation and counterfeit performance of duties, but in unfeigned love and peace and of matrimonial love, no doubt but that was chiefly meant, which by the ancient sages was thus parabled, that Love, if he be not twin born, yet hath a brother wondrous like him, called Anteros, whom while he seeks all about, his chance is to meet with many false and feigning desires that wander singly up and down in his likeness by them in their borrowed garb, Love, though not wholly blind, as poets wrong him, yet having but one eye, as being born an archer aiming, and that eye not the quickest in this dark region here below, which is not Love's proper sphere, partly out of the simplicity and credulity which is native to him, often deceived, embraces and consorts him with these obvious and suborned striplings, as if they were his mother's own sons, for so he thinks them, while they subtilly keep themselves most on his

duties which there is no help for, but they must be dissembled If Solomon's advice be not over-frolic, 'Live joyfully,' saith he, 'with the wife whom 'thou lovest, all thy days, for that is thy portion ' how then, where we find it impossible to rejoice or to love, can we obey this precept? How miserably do we defraud ourselves of that comfortable portion which God gives us, by striving vainly to glue an error together which God and nature will not join, adding but more vexation and violence to that blissful society by our importunate superstition, that will not hearken to St Paul, 1 Cor vii, who, speaking of marriage and divorce, determines plain enough in general that God therein 'hath called 'us to peace, and not to bondage!' Yea, God himself commands in his law more than once, and by his prophet Malachi, as Calvin and the best translations read, that 'he who hates, let him 'divorce,' that is, he who cannot love Hence it is that the rabbins, and Maimonides, famous among the rest, in a book of his set forth by Buxtorfius, tells us, that 'divorce was permitted by Moses to 'preserve peace in marriage, and quiet in the 'family ' Surely the Jews had their saving peace about them as well as we, yet care was taken that this wholesome provision for household peace should also be allowed them and must this be denied to Christians? O perverseness! that the law should be made more provident of peacemaking than the gospel! that the gospel should be put to beg a most necessary help of mercy from the

ON EDUCATION

TO MASTER SAMUEL HARTLIB 1644

good things, and arts in due order, which would bring the whole language quickly into their power This I take to be the most rational and most profitable way of learning languages, and whereby we may best hope to give account to God of our youth spent herein

And for the usual method of teaching arts, I deem it to be an old error of universities, not yet well recovered from the scholastic grossness of barbarous ages, that instead of beginning with arts most easy, (and those be such as are most obvious to the sense;) they present their young unmatriculated novices, at first coming, with the most intellective abstractions of logic and metaphysics, so that they having but newly left those grammatic flats and shallows, where they stuck unreasonably to learn a few words with lamentable construction, and now on the sudden transported under another climate, to be tossed and turmoiled with their unballasted wits in fathomless and unquiet deeps of controversy, do for the most part grow into hatred and contempt of learning, mocked and deluded all this while with ragged notions and babblements, while they expected worthy and delightful knowledge, till poverty or youthful years call them importunately their several ways, and hasten them, with the sway of friends, either to an ambitious and mercenary, or ignorantly zealous divinity some allured to the trade of law, grounding their purposes not on the prudent and heavenly contemplation of justice and equity,

wits to that asinine feast of sowthistles and brambles which is commonly set before them as all the food and entertainment of their tenderest and most docible age I call therefore a complete and generous education, that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war And how all this may be done between twelve and one and twenty, less time than is now bestowed in pure trifling at grammar and sophistry, is to be thus ordered.

First, to find out a spacious house and ground about it fit for an academy, and big enough to lodge a hundred and fifty persons, whereof twenty or thereabout may be attendants, all under the government of one, who shall be thought of desert sufficient, and ability either to do all or wisely to direct and oversee it done This place should be at once both school and university, not needing a remove to any other house of scholarship, except it be some peculiar college of law, or physic, where they mean to be practitioners, but as for those general studies which take up all our time from Lily to commencing, as they term it, master of art, it should be absolute After this pattern, as many edifices may be converted to this use as shall be needful in every city throughout this land, which would tend much to the increase of learning and civility everywhere This number, less or more, thus collected, to the convenience of a foot company, or interchangeably two troops of cavalry,

should divide their day's work into three parts as it lies orderly; their studies, their exercise, and their diet

For their studies . first, they should begin with the chief and necessary rules of some good grammar, either that now used or any better ; and while this is doing, their speech is to be fashioned to a distinct and clear pronunciation, as near as may be to the Italian, especially in the vowels For we Englishmen, being far northerly, do not open our mouths in the cold air wide enough to grace a southern tongue ; but are observed by all other nations to speak exceeding close and inward, so that to smatter Latin with an English mouth is as ill a hearing as law French Next, to make them expert in the usefullest points of grammar, and withal to season them and win them early to the love of virtue and true labour, ere any flattering seducement or vain principle seize them wandering, some easy and delightful book of education would be read to them, whereof the Greeks have store, as Cebes, Plutarch, and other Socratic discourses. But in Latin we have none of classic authority extant, except the two or three first books of Quinctilian, and some select pieces elsewhere.

But here the main skill and groundwork will be to temper them such lectures and explanations, upon every opportunity, as may lead and draw them in willing obedience, inflamed with the study of learning and the admiration of virtue, stirred up with high hopes of living to be brave men and

worthy patriots, dear to God, and famous to all ages, that they may despise and scorn all their childish and ill-taught qualities, to delight in manly and liberal exercises, which he who hath the art and proper eloquence to catch them with, what with mild and effectual persuasions, and what with the intimation of some fear, if need be, but chiefly by his own example, might in a short space gain them to an incredible diligence and courage, infusing into their young breasts such an ingenuous and noble ardour as would not fail to make many of them renowned and matchless men At the same time, some other hour of the day, might be taught them the rules of arithmetic, and soon after the elements of geometry, even playing, as the old manner was After evening repast, till bedtime, their thoughts would be best taken up in the easy grounds of religion, and the story of scripture.

The next step would be to the authors of agriculture, Cato, Varro, and Columella, for the matter is most easy, and if the language be difficult, so much the better, it is not a difficulty above their years And here will be an occasion of inciting and enabling them hereafter to improve the tillage of their country, to recover the bad soil, and to remedy the waste that is made of good, for this was one of Hercules' praises Ere half these authors be read (which will soon be with plying hard and daily) they cannot choose but be masters of any ordinary prose So that it will be then seasonable for them to learn in any modern author the use of

the globes, and all the maps first with the old names and then with the new, or they might be then capable to read any compendious method of natural philosophy And at the same time might be entering into the Greek tongue, after the same manner as was before prescribed in the Latin, whereby the difficulties of grammar being soon overcome, all the historical physiology of Aristotle and Theophrastus are open before them, and, as I may say, under contribution The like access will be to Vitruvius, to Seneca's natural questions, to Mela, Celsus, Pliny, or Solinus And having thus passed the principles of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and geography, with a general compact of physics, they may descend in mathematics to the instrumental science of trigonometry, and from thence to fortification, architecture, enginery, or navigation And in natural philosophy they may proceed leisurely from the history of meteors, minerals, plants, and living creatures, as far as anatomy

Then also in course might be read to them, out of some not tedious writer, the institution of physic, that they may know the tempers, the humours, the seasons, and how to manage a crudity, which he who can wisely and timely do, is not only a great physician to himself and to his friends, but also may, at some time or other, save an army by this frugal and expenseless means only, and not let the healthy and stout bodies of young men rot away under him for want of this discipline, which is a

great pity, and no less a shame to the commander To set forward all these proceedings in nature and mathematics, what hinders but that they may procure, as oft as shall be needful, the helpful experience of hunters, fowlers, fishermen, shepherds, gardeners, apothecaries? and in the other sciences, architects, engineers, mariners, anatomists, who doubtless would be ready, some for reward, and some to favour such a hopeful seminary And this will give them such a real tincture of natural knowledge as they shall never forget, but daily augment with delight Then also those poets which are now counted most hard will be both facile and pleasant, Orpheus, Hesiod, Theocritus, Aratus, Nicander, Oppian, Dionysius; and in Latin, Lucretius, Manilius, and the rural part of Virgil.

By this time, years and good general precepts will have furnished them more distinctly with that act of reason which in ethics is called *Proairesis*, that they may with some judgment contemplate upon moral good and evil Then will be required a special reinforcement of constant and sound indoctrinating, to set them right and firm, instructing them more amply in the knowledge of virtue and the hatred of vice, while their young and pliant affections are led through all the moral works of Plato, Xenophon, Cicero, Plutarch, Laertius, and those Locrian remnants of Timaeus, but still to be reduced in their nightward studies, wherewith they close the day's work, under the determinate sentence of David or Solomon or the evangelists and

apostolic scriptures Being perfect in the knowledge of personal duty they may then begin the study of economics. And either now, or before this, they may have easily learned, at any odd hour, the Italian tongue And soon after, but with wariness and good antidote, it would be wholesome enough to let them taste some choice comedies, Greek, Latin, or Italian, those tragedies also, that treat of household matters, as Trachiniæ, Alcestis, and the like

The next removal must be to the study of politics, to know the beginning, end, and reasons of political societies; that they may not, in a dangerous fit of the commonwealth, be such poor, shaken, uncertain reeds, of such a tottering conscience, as many of our great counsellors have lately shewn themselves, but steadfast pillars of the state After this, they are to dive into the grounds of law, and legal justice, delivered first and with best warrant by Moses, and as far as human prudence can be trusted, in those extolled remains of Grecian lawgivers, Lycurgus, Solon, Zaleucus, Charondas, and thence to all the Roman edicts and tables with their Justinian, and so down to the Saxon and common laws of England, and the statutes.

Sundays also and every evening may be now understandingly spent in the highest matters of theology, and church history ancient and modern, and ere this time the Hebrew tongue at a set hour might have been gained, that the Scriptures may be now read in their own original, whereto it

would be no impossibility to add the Chaldee and the Syrian dialect When all these employments are well conquered, then will the choice histories, heroic poems, and Attic tragedies of stateliest and most regal argument, with all the famous political orations, offer themselves; which if they were not only read, but some of them got by memory, and solemnly pronounced with right accent and grace, as might be taught, would endue them even with the spirit and vigour of Demosthenes or Cicero, Euripides or Sophocles

And now, lastly, will be the time to read with them those organic arts which enable men to discourse and write perspicuously, elegantly, and according to the fittest style, of lofty, mean, or lowly Logic, therefore, so much as is useful, is to be referred to this due place with all her well-couched heads and topics, until it be time to open her contracted palm into a graceful and ornate rhetoric, taught out of the rule of Plato, Aristotle, Phalereus, Cicero, Hermogenes, Longinus To which poetry would be made subsequent, or indeed rather precedent, as being less subtile and fine, but more simple, sensuous, and passionate. I mean not here the prosody of a verse, which they could not but have hit on before among the rudiments of grammar; but that sublime art which in Aristotle's Poetics, in Horace, and the Italian commentaries of Castelvetro, Tasso, Mazzoni, and others, teaches what the laws are of a true epic poem, what of a dramatic, what of a lyric, what decorum is, which

The course of study hitherto briefly described is, what I can guess by reading, likest to those ancient and famous schools of Pythagoras, Plato, Isocrates, Aristotle, and such others, out of which were bred such a number of renowned philosophers, orators, historians, poets, and princes all over Greece, Italy, and Asia, besides the flourishing studies of Cyrene and Alexandria But herein it shall exceed them, and supply a defect as great as that which Plato noted in the commonwealth of Sparta, whereas that city trained up their youth most for war, and these in their academies and Lycæum all for the gown, this institution of breeding which I here delineate shall be equally good both for peace and war Therefore about an hour and a half ere they eat at noon should be allowed them for exercise, and due rest afterwards, but the time for this may be enlarged at pleasure, according as their rising in the morning shall be early

The exercise which I commend first is the exact use of their weapon, to guard, and to strike safely with edge or point, this will keep them healthy, nimble, strong, and well in breath, it is also the likeliest means to make them grow large and tall, and to inspire them with a gallant and fearless courage, which being tempered with seasonable lectures and precepts to them of true fortitude and patience, will turn into a native and heroic valour, and make them hate the cowardice of doing wrong They must be also practised in all the locks and

sport, but with much exactness and daily muster, served out the rudiments of their soldiership, in all the skill of embattling, marching, encamping, fortifying, besieging, and battering, with all the helps of ancient and modern stratagems, tactics, and warlike maxims, they may as it were out of a long war come forth renowned and perfect commanders in the service of their country They would not then, if they were trusted with fair and hopeful armies, suffer them, for want of just and wise discipline, to shed away from about them like sick feathers, though they be never so oft supplied they would not suffer their empty and unrecruitable colonels of twenty men in a company to quaff out or convey into secret hoards the wages of a delusive list and a miserable remnant, yet in the meanwhile to be overmastered with a score or two of drunkards, the only soldiery left about them, or else to comply with all rapines and violences No, certainly, if they knew aught of that knowledge that belongs to good men or good governors, they would not suffer these things

But to return to our own institute besides these constant exercises at home, there is another opportunity of gaining experience to be won from pleasure itself abroad, in those vernal seasons of the year when the air is calm and pleasant, it were an injury and sullenness against nature not to go out and see her riches, and partake in her rejoicing with heaven and earth I should not therefore be a persuader to them of studying much then, after

Now, lastly, for their diet there cannot be much to say, save only that it would be best in the same house, for much time else would be lost abroad, and many ill habits got, and that it should be plain, healthful, and moderate, I suppose is out of controversy Thus, Mr Hartlib, you have a general view in writing, as your desire was, of that which at several times I had discoursed with you concerning the best and noblest way of education, not beginning, as some have done, from the cradle, which yet might be worth many considerations, if brevity had not been my scope, many other circumstances also I could have mentioned, but this, to such as have the worth in them to make trial, for light and direction may be enough Only I believe that this is not a bow for every man to shoot in that counts himself a teacher, but will require sinews almost equal to those which Homer gave Ulysses, yet I am withal persuaded that it may prove much more easy in the assay than it now seems at a distance, and much more illustrious; howbeit not more difficult than I imagine, and that imagination presents me with nothing but very happy, and very possible according to best wishes, if God have so decreed, and this age have spirit and capacity enough to apprehend

AREOPAGITICA

A SPEECH FOR THE LIBERTY OF UNLICENSED PRINTING TO THE PARLIAMENT OF ENGLAND 1644

Τοὐλεύθερον δ' ἐκεῖνο τίς θέλει πόλει
Χρηστόν τι βούλευμ' εἰς μέσον φέρειν ἔχων,
Καὶ ταῦθ' ὁ χρῄζων λαμπρος ἐσθ', ο μη θελων
Σιγᾷ τ' τούτων ἔστ' ἰσαίτερον πόλει,—*Euripides*

This is true liberty, when free born men,
Having to advise the public, may speak free,
Which he who can, and will, deserves high praise
Who neither can, nor will, may hold his peace
What can be juster in a state than this?

AREOPAGITICA.

THEY who to states and governors of the commonwealth direct their speech, high court of parliament, or wanting such access in a private condition, write that which they foresee may advance the public good, I suppose them, as at the beginning of no mean endeavour, not a little altered and moved inwardly in their minds; some with doubt of what will be the success, others with fear of what will be the censure; some with hope, others with confidence of what they have to speak. And me perhaps each of these dispositions, as the subject was whereon I entered, may have at other times variously affected; and likely might in these foremost expressions now also disclose which of them swayed most, but that the very attempt of this address thus made, and the thought of whom it hath recourse to, hath got the power within me to a passion, far more welcome than incidental to a preface.

Which though I stay not to confess ere any ask, I shall be blameless, if it be no other than the joy and gratulation which it brings to all who wish to promote their country's liberty, whereof this whole

discourse proposed will be a certain testimony, if not a trophy. For this is not the liberty which we can hope, that no grievance ever should arise in the commonwealth, that let no man in this world expect; but when complaints are freely heard, deeply considered, and speedily reformed, then is the utmost bound of civil liberty obtained that wise men look for To which if I now manifest, by the very sound of this which I shall utter, that we are already in good part arrived, and yet from such a steep disadvantage of tyranny and superstition grounded into our principles as was beyond the manhood of a Roman recovery, it will be attributed first, as is most due, to the strong assistance of God, our deliverer; next, to your faithful guidance and undaunted wisdom, lords and commons of England Neither is it in God's esteem the diminution of his glory when honourable things are spoken of good men and worthy magistrates, which if I now first should begin to do, after so fair a progress of your laudable deeds, and such a long obligement upon the whole realm to your indefatigable virtues, I might be justly reckoned among the tardiest and the unwillingest of them that praise ye

Nevertheless there being three principal things without which all praising is but courtship and flattery first, when that only is praised which is solidly worth praise; next, when greatest likelihoods are brought that such things are truly and really in those persons to whom they are ascribed,

the other, when he who praises, by shewing that such his actual persuasion is of whom he writes, can demonstrate that he flatters not, the former two of these I have heretofore endeavoured, rescuing the employment from him who went about to impair your merits with a trivial and malignant encomium, the latter as belonging chiefly to mine own acquittal, that whom I so extolled I did not flatter, hath been reserved opportunely to this occasion For he who freely magnifies what hath been nobly done, and fears not to declare as freely what might be done better, gives ye the best covenant of his fidelity; and that his loyalest affection and his hope waits on your proceedings His highest praising is not flattery, and his plainest advice is a kind of praising, for though I should affirm and hold by argument that it would fare better with truth, with learning, and
3 the commonwealth, if one of your published orders, which I should name, were called in, yet at the same time it could not but much redound to the lustre of your mild and equal government, whenas private persons are hereby animated to think ye better pleased with public advice than other statists have been delighted heretofore with public flattery And men will then see what difference there is between the magnanimity of a triennial parliament and that jealous haughtiness of prelates and cabin counsellors that usurped of late, whenas they shall observe ye in the midst of your victories and successes more gently brooking written exceptions against a voted order than other courts, which had

produced nothing worth memory but the weak ostentation of wealth, would have endured the least signified dislike at any sudden proclamation.

If I should thus far presume upon the meek demeanour of your civil and gentle greatness, lords and commons, as what your published order hath directly said, that to gainsay, I might defend myself with ease, if any should accuse me of being new or insolent, did they but know how much better I find ye esteem it to imitate the old and elegant humanity of Greece than the barbaric pride of a Hunnish and Norwegian stateliness. And out of those ages to whose polite wisdom and letters we owe that we are not yet Goths and Jutlanders, I could name him who from his private house wrote that discourse to the parliament of Athens that persuades them to change the form of democracy which was then established. Such honour was done in those days to men who professed the study of wisdom and eloquence, not only in their own country but in other lands, that cities and signiories heard them gladly, and with great respect, if they had aught in public to admonish the state. Thus did Dion Prusæus, a stranger and a private orator, counsel the Rhodians against a former edict; and I abound with other like examples, which to set here would be superfluous. But if from the industry of a life wholly dedicated to studious labours, and those natural endowments haply not the worst for two and fifty degrees of northern latitude, so much must be derogated as to count me not

equal to any of those who had this privilege, I would obtain to be thought not so inferior as yourselves are superior to the most of them who received their counsel; and how far you excel them, be assured, lords and commons, there can no greater testimony appear than when your prudent spirit acknowledges and obeys the voice of reason, from what quarter soever it be heard speaking, and renders ye as willing to repeal any act of your own setting forth as any set forth by your predecessors

If ye be thus resolved, as it were injury to think ye were not, I know not what should withhold me from presenting ye with a fit instance wherein to shew both that love of truth which ye eminently profess, and that uprightness of your judgment which is not wont to be partial to yourselves; by judging over again that order which ye have ordained 'to regulate printing that no book, 'pamphlet, or paper shall be henceforth printed, 'unless the same be first approved and licensed 'by such, or at least one of such, as shall be thereto 'appointed' For that part which preserves justly every man's copy to himself, or provides for the poor, I touch not, only wish they be not made pretences to abuse and persecute honest and painful men who offend not in either of these particulars. But that other clause of licensing books, which we thought had died with his brother quadragesimal and matrimonial when the prelates expired, I shall now attend with such a homily as shall lay before ye, first, the inventors of it to be those whom ye will be

loath to own; next, what is to be thought in general of reading, whatever sort the books be; and that this order avails nothing to the suppressing of scandalous, seditious, and libellous books, which were mainly intended to be suppressed. Last, that it will be primely to the discouragement of all learning, and the stop of truth, not only by disexercising and blunting our abilities in what we know already, but by hindering and cropping the discovery that might be yet further made, both in religious and civil wisdom.

I deny not but that it is of greatest concernment in the church and commonwealth to have a vigilant eye how books demean themselves, as well as men; and thereafter to confine, imprison, and do sharpest justice on them as malefactors; for books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a progeny of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragon's teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book: who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were, in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed

and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life. It is true, no age can restore a life, whereof, perhaps, there is no great loss; and revolutions of ages do not oft-recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole nations fare the worse We should be wary, therefore, what persecution we raise against the living labours of public men, how we spill that seasoned life of man, preserved and stored up in books, since we see a kind of homicide may be thus committed, sometimes a martyrdom; and if it extend to the whole impression, a kind of massacre, whereof the execution ends not in the slaying of an elemental life, but strikes at the ethereal and fifth essence, the breath of reason itself, slays an immortality rather than a life. But lest I should be condemned of introducing licence while I oppose licensing, I refuse not the pains to be so much historical as will serve to shew what hath been done by ancient and famous commonwealths against this disorder, till the very time that this project of licensing crept out of the inquisition, was catched up by our prelates, and hath caught some of our presbyters

In Athens, where books and wits were ever busier than in any other part of Greece, I find but only two sorts of writings which the magistrate cared to take notice of, those either blasphemous and atheistical, or libellous Thus the books of Protagoras were by the judges of Areopagus commanded to be burnt, and himself banished the territory for a discourse begun with his confessing

not to know 'whether there were gods, or whether 'not' And against defaming, it was agreed that none should be traduced by name, as was the manner of Vetus Comœdia, whereby we may guess how they censured libelling, and this course was quick enough, as Cicero writes, to quell both the desperate wits of other atheists, and the open way of defaming, as the event showed Of other sects and opinions, though tending to voluptuousness, and the denying of divine Providence, they took no heed Therefore we do not read that either Epicurus, or that libertine school of Cyrene, or what the Cynic impudence uttered, was ever questioned by the laws Neither is it recorded that the writings of those old comedians were suppressed, though the acting of them were forbid; and that Plato commended the reading of Aristophanes, the loosest of them all, to his royal scholar Dionysius, is commonly known, and may be excused, if holy Chrysostom, as is reported, nightly studied so much the same author, and had the art to cleanse a scurrilous vehemence into the style of a rousing sermon

That other leading city of Greece, Lacedæmon, considering that Lycurgus their lawgiver was so addicted to elegant learning as to have been the first that brought out of Ionia the scattered works of Homer, and sent the poet Thales from Crete, to prepare and mollify the Spartan surliness with his smooth songs and odes, the better to plant among them law and civility, it is to be wondered how

museless and unbookish they were, minding nought but the feats of war There needed no licensing of books among them, for they disliked all but their own laconic apophthegms, and took a slight occasion to chase Archilochus out of their city, perhaps for composing in a higher strain than their own soldiery ballads and roundels could reach to; or if it were for his broad verses, they were not therein so cautious but they were as dissolute in their promiscuous conversing, whence Euripides affirms, in Andromache, that their women were all unchaste

This much may give us light after what sort of books were prohibited among the Greeks. The Romans also for many ages trained up only to a military roughness, resembling most the Lacedæmonian guise, knew of learning little but what their twelve tables and the pontific college with their augurs and flamens taught them in religion and law, so unacquainted with other learning that when Carneades and Critolaus, with the stoic Diogenes, coming ambassadors to Rome, took thereby occasion to give the city a taste of their philosophy, they were suspected for seducers by no less a man than Cato the Censor, who moved it in the senate to dismiss them speedily, and to banish all such Attic babblers out of Italy. But Scipio and others of the noblest senators withstood him and his old Sabine austerity, honoured and admired the men, and the censor himself at last, in his old age, fell to the study of that whereof before

prohibiting to be read what they fancied not; yet sparing in their censures, and the books not many which they so dealt with; till Martin the Fifth, by his bull, not only prohibited, but was the first that excommunicated the reading of heretical books; for about that time Wicklef and Husse growing terrible were they who first drove the papal court to a stricter policy of prohibiting Which course Leo the Tenth and his successors followed, until the council of Trent and the Spanish inquisition, engendering together, brought forth or perfected those catalogues and expurging indexes that rake through the entrails of many an old good author with a violation worse than any could be offered to his tomb

Nor did they stay in matters heretical, but any subject that was not to their palate, they either condemned in a prohibition, or had it straight into the new purgatory of an index To fill up the measure of encroachment, their last invention was to ordain that no book, pamphlet, or paper should be printed (as if St. Peter had bequeathed them the keys of the press also as well as of Paradise) unless it were approved and licensed under the hands of two or three gluttonous friars For example.—

'Let the chancellor Cini be pleased to see if in this present work be contained aught that may withstand the printing

'Vincent Rabatta, Vicar of Florence'

'I have seen this present work, and find nothing athwart the Catholic faith and good manners in witness whereof I have given, &c

'Nicolò Cini, Chancellor of Florence.'

'Attending the precedent relation, it is allowed that this present work of Davanzati may be printed

'Vincent Rabatta,' &c

'It may be printed, July 15

'Friar Simon Mompei d'Amelia, Chancellor of the 'Holy Office in Florence'

Sure they have a conceit, if he of the bottomless pit had not long since broke prison, that this quadruple exorcism would bar him down. I fear their next design will be to get into their custody the licensing of that which they say Claudius intended, but went not through with. Vouchsafe to see another of their forms, the Roman stamp —

'Imprimatur, If it seem good to the reverend master of the Holy Palace

'Belcastro, Vicegerent.'

'Imprimatur,'

'Friar Nicolò Rodolphi, Master of the Holy Palace'

Sometimes five imprimaturs are seen together, dialogue wise, in the piazza of one titlepage, complimenting and ducking each to other with their shaven reverences, whether the author, who stands by in perplexity at the foot of his epistle, shall to the press or to the sponge. These are the pretty responsories, these are the dear antiphonies, that so bewitched of late our prelates and their chaplains with the goodly echo they made, and besotted us to the gay imitation of a lordly imprimatur, one from Lambeth-house, another from the west end of Paul's, so apishly romanizing, that the word of command still was set down in Latin, as if the learned grammatical pen that wrote it would cast no ink without Latin, or perhaps, as they thought, because no vulgar tongue was worthy

was the rare morsel so officiously snatched up and so illfavouredly imitated by our inquisiturient bishops, and the attendant minorites, their chaplains That ye like not now these most certain authors of this licensing order, and that all sinister intention was far distant from your thoughts when ye were importuned the passing it, all men who know the integrity of your actions, and how ye honour truth, will clear ye readily.

But some will say, what though the inventors were bad, the thing for all that may be good. It may be so; yet if that thing be no such deep invention, but obvious and easy for any man to light on, and yet best and wisest commonwealths through all ages and occasions have forborne to use it, and falsest seducers and oppressors of men were the first who took it up, and to no other purpose but to obstruct and hinder the first approach of reformation, I am of those who believe, it will be a harder alchymy than Lullius ever knew, to sublimate any good use out of such an invention. Yet this only is what I request to gain from this reason, that it may be held a dangerous and suspicious fruit, as certainly it deserves, for the tree that bore it, until I can dissect one by one the properties it has. But I have first to finish, as was propounded, what is to be thought in general of reading books, whatever sort they be, and whether be more the benefit or the harm that thence proceeds.

Not to insist upon the examples of Moses, Daniel, and Paul, who were skilful in all the

dream, for reading Cicero; or else it was a phantasm, bred by the fever which had then seized him. For had an angel been his discipliner, unless it were for dwelling too much on Ciceronianisms, and had chastised the reading, not the vanity, it had been plainly partial, first, to correct him for grave Cicero, and not for scurril Plautus, whom he confesses to have been reading not long before; next to correct him only, and let so many more ancient fathers wax old in those pleasant and florid studies, without the lash of such a tutoring apparition; insomuch that Basil teaches how some good use may be made of Margites, a sportful poem, not now extant, writ by Homer; and why not then of Morgante, an Italian romance much to the same purpose?

But if it be agreed we shall be tried by visions, there is a vision recorded by Eusebius, far ancienter than this tale of Jerome, to the nun Eustochium, and besides, has nothing of a fever in it. Dionysius Alexandrinus was, about the year 240, a person of great name in the church for piety and learning, who had wont to avail himself much against heretics, by being conversant in their books; until a certain presbyter laid it scrupulously to his conscience, how he durst venture himself among those defiling volumes. The worthy man, loath to give offence, fell into a new debate with himself, what was to be thought; when suddenly a vision sent from God (it is his own epistle that so avers it) confirmed him in these words: 'Read any 'books whatever come to thy hands, for thou art

and collated, are of main service and assistance toward the speedy attainment of what is truest

I conceive, therefore, that when God did enlarge the universal diet of man's body, (saving ever the rules of temperance,) he then also, as before, left arbitrary the dieting and repasting of our minds, as wherein every mature man might have to exercise his own leading capacity How great a virtue is temperance, how much of moment through the whole life of man! Yet God commits the managing so great a trust, without particular law or prescription, wholly to the demeanour of every grown man And therefore when he himself tabled the Jews from heaven, that omer, which was every man's daily portion of manna, is computed to have been more than might have well sufficed the heartiest feeder thrice as many meals For those actions which enter into a man, rather than issue out of him, and therefore defile not, God uses not to captivate under a perpetual childhood of prescription, but trusts him with the gift of reason to be his own chooser, there were but little work left for preaching, if law and compulsion should grow so fast upon those things which heretofore were governed only by exhortation Solomon informs us that much reading is a weariness to the flesh, but neither he nor other inspired author tells us that such or such reading is unlawful, yet certainly had God thought good to limit us herein, it had been much more expedient to have told us what was unlawful than what was wearisome.

adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world, we bring impurity much rather, that which purifies us is trial, and trial is by what is contrary That virtue therefore which is but a youngling in the contemplation of evil, and knows not the utmost that vice promises to her followers, and rejects it, is but a blank virtue, not a pure, her whiteness is but an excremental whiteness, which was the reason why our sage and serious poet Spenser, (whom I dare be known to think a better teacher than Scotus or Aquinas,) describing true temperance under the person of Guion, brings him in with his palmer through the cave of Mammon, and the bower of earthly bliss, that he might see and know, and yet abstain.

Since therefore the knowledge and survey of vice is in this world so necessary to the constituting of human virtue, and the scanning of error to the confirmation of truth, how can we more safely, and with less danger, scout into the regions of sin and falsity, than by reading all manner of tractates, and hearing all manner of reason? And this is the benefit which may be had of books promiscuously read But of the harm that may result hence, three kinds are usually reckoned. First, is feared the infection that may spread, but then, all human learning and controversy in religious points must remove out of the world, yea, the Bible itself, for that ofttimes relates blasphemy not nicely, it de-

terity's sake, whom Henry the Eighth named in merriment his vicar of hell By which compendious way all the contagion that foreign books can infuse will find a passage to the people far easier and shorter than an Indian voyage, though it could be sailed either by the north of Cataio eastward or of Canada westward, while our Spanish licensing gags the English press never so severely

But, on the other side, that infection which is from books of controversy in religion is more doubtful and dangerous to the learned than to the ignorant, and yet those books must be permitted untouched by the licenser It will be hard to instance where any ignorant man hath been ever seduced by any papistical book in English, unless it were commended and expounded to him by some of that clergy, and indeed all such tractates, whether false or true, are as the prophecy of Isaiah was to the eunuch, not to be understood without a guide But of our priests and doctors how many have been corrupted by studying the comments of Jesuits and Sorbonists, and how fast they could transfuse that corruption into the people, our experience is both late and sad It is not forgot since the acute and distinct Arminius was perverted merely by the perusing of a nameless discourse written at Delft, which at first he took in hand to confute

Seeing therefore that those books, and those in great abundance, which are likeliest to taint both life and doctrine, cannot be suppressed without the

that from him which is unfit for his reading, we should, in the judgment of Aristotle not only but of Solomon and of our Saviour, not vouchsafe him good precepts, and by consequence not willingly admit him to good books, as being certain that a wise man will make better use of an idle pamphlet than a fool will do of sacred scripture

It is next alleged, we must not expose ourselves to temptations without necessity, and next to that, not employ our time in vain things To both these objections one answer will serve, out of the grounds already laid, that to all men such books are not temptations, nor vanities, but useful drugs and materials wherewith to temper and compose effective and strong medicines, which man's life cannot want The rest, as children and childish men, who have not the art to qualify and prepare these working minerals, well may be exhorted to forbear, but hindered forcibly they cannot be, by all the licensing that sainted inquisition could ever yet contrive; which is what I promised to deliver next that this order of licensing conduces nothing to the end for which it was framed, and hath almost prevented me by being clear already while thus much hath been explaining See the ingenuity of Truth, who, when she gets a free and willing hand, opens herself faster than the pace of method and discourse can overtake her It was the task which I began with, to shew that no nation, or well instituted state, if they valued books at all, did ever use this way of licensing, and it might be

also for commending the latter of them, though he were the malicious libeller of his chief friends, to be read by the tyrant Dionysius, who had little need of such trash to spend his time on? But that he knew this licensing of poems had reference and dependence to many other provisoes there set down in his fancied republic, which in this world could have no place, and so neither he himself, nor any magistrate or city, ever imitated that course, which, taken apart from those other collateral injunctions, must needs be vain and fruitless

For if they fell upon one kind of strictness, unless their care were equal to regulate all other things of like aptness to corrupt the mind, that single endeavour they knew would be but a fond labour, to shut and fortify one gate against corruption, and be necessitated to leave others round about wide open If we think to regulate printing, thereby to rectify manners, we must regulate all recreations and pastimes, all that is delightful to man. No music must be heard, no song be set or sung, but what is grave and Doric There must be licensing dancers, that no gesture, motion, or deportment be taught our youth, but what by their allowance shall be thought honest, for such Plato was provided of. It will ask more than the work of twenty licensers to examine all the lutes, the violins, and the guitars in every house; they must not be suffered to prattle as they do, but must be licensed what they may say And who shall silence all the airs and madrigals that whisper softness in chambers? The

windows also, and the balconies, must be thought on; there are shrewd books with dangerous frontispieces set to sale: who shall prohibit them, shall twenty licensers? The villages also must have their visitors to inquire what lectures the bagpipe and the rebec reads, even to the ballatry and the gamut of every municipal fiddler, for these are the countryman's Arcadias, and his Monte Mayors.

Next, what more national corruption, for which England hears ill abroad, than household gluttony? Who shall be the rectors of our daily rioting? And what shall be done to inhibit the multitudes that frequent those houses where drunkenness is sold and harboured? Our garments also should be referred to the licensing of some more sober workmasters, to see them cut into a less wanton garb. Who shall regulate all the mixed conversation of our youth, male and female together, as is the fashion of this country? Who shall still appoint what shall be discoursed, what presumed, and no further? Lastly, who shall forbid and separate all idle resort, all evil company? These things will be, and must be; but how they shall be least hurtful, how least enticing, herein consists the grave and governing wisdom of a state.

To sequester out of the world into Atlantic and Utopian politics, which never can be drawn into use, will not mend our condition; but to ordain wisely as in this world of evil, in the midst whereof God hath placed us unavoidably. Nor is it Plato's licensing of books will do this, which necessarily

pulls along with it so many other kinds of licensing as will make us all both ridiculous and weary, and yet frustrate, but those unwritten, or at least unconstraining laws of virtuous education, religious and civil nurture, which Plato there mentions as the bonds and ligaments of the commonwealth, the pillars and the sustainers of every written statute; these they be which will bear chief sway in such matters as these, when all licensing will be easily eluded Impunity and remissness for certain are the bane of a commonwealth, but here the great art lies, to discern in what the law is to bid restraint and punishment, and in what things persuasion only is to work. If every action which is good or evil in man at ripe years were to be under pittance, prescription, and compulsion, what were virtue but a name, what praise could be then due to well doing, what gramercy to be sober, just, or continent?

Many there be that complain of divine Providence for suffering Adam to transgress Foolish tongues! when God gave him reason, he gave him freedom to choose, for reason is but choosing, he had been else a mere artificial Adam, such an Adam as he is in the motions[1] We ourselves esteem not of that obedience, or love, or gift, which is of force, God therefore left him free, set before him a provoking object ever almost in his eyes; herein consisted his merit, herein the right of his reward, the praise of his abstinence Wherefore did he create passions within us, pleasures

[1] Puppet shows —ED

round about us, but that these rightly tempered are the very ingredients of virtue? They are not skilful considerers of human things who imagine to remove sin by removing the matter of sin, for, besides that it is a huge heap increasing under the very act of diminishing, though some part of it may for a time be withdrawn from some persons, it cannot from all, in such a universal thing as books are, and when this is done, yet the sin remains entire Though ye take from a covetous man all his treasure, he has yet one jewel left, ye cannot bereave him of his covetousness Banish all objects of lust, shut up all youth into the severest discipline that can be exercised in any hermitage, ye cannot make them chaste that came not thither so such great care and wisdom is required to the right managing of this point

Suppose we could expel sin by this means, look how much we thus expel of sin, so much we expel of virtue for the matter of them both is the same remove that, and ye remove them both alike This justifies the high providence of God, who, though he commands us temperance, justice, continence, yet pours out before us even to a profuseness all desirable things, and gives us minds that can wander beyond all limit and satiety Why should we then affect a rigour contrary to the manner of God and of nature, by abridging or scanting those means, which books freely permitted are, both to the trial of virtue and the exercise of truth?

It would be better done, to learn that the law

must needs be frivolous which goes to restrain things uncertainly and yet equally working to good and to evil. And were I the chooser, a dram of well-doing should be preferred before many times as much the forcible hindrance of evil doing. For God sure esteems the growth and completing of one virtuous person more than the restraint of ten vicious. And albeit whatever thing we hear or see, sitting, walking, travelling, or conversing, may be fitly called our book, and is of the same effect that writings are; yet grant the thing to be prohibited were only books, it appears that this order hitherto is far insufficient to the end which it intends. Do we not see, not once or oftener, but weekly, that continued court-libel[1] against the parliament and city, printed, as the wet sheets can witness, and dispersed among us for all that licensing can do? Yet this is the prime service, a man would think, wherein this order should give proof of itself. If it were executed, you will say. But certain, if execution be remiss or blindfold now, and in this particular, what will it be hereafter, and in other books?

If then the order shall not be vain and frustrate, behold a new labour, lords and commons, ye must repeal and proscribe all scandalous and unlicensed books already printed and divulged; after ye have drawn them up into a list, that all may know which are condemned, and which not; and ordain that no foreign books be delivered out of custody,

[1] The 'Mercurius Aulicus,' a royalist weekly paper.—ED.

till they have been read over. This office will require the whole time of not a few overseers, and those no vulgar men. There be also books which are partly useful and excellent, partly culpable and pernicious; this work will ask as many more officials, to make expurgations and expunctions, that the commonwealth of learning be not damnified In fine, when the multitude of books increase upon their hands, ye must be fain to catalogue all those printers who are found frequently offending, and forbid the importation of their whole suspected typography In a word, that this your order may be exact, and not deficient, ye must reform it perfectly, according to the model of Trent and Sevil, which I know ye abhor to do

Yet though ye should condescend to this, which God forbid, the order still would be but fruitless and defective to that end whereto ye meant it If to prevent sects and schisms, who is so unread or uncatechised in story that hath not heard of many sects refusing books as a hindrance, and preserving their doctrine unmixed for many ages, only by unwritten traditions? The Christian faith (for that was once a schism) is not unknown to have spread all over Asia ere any gospel or epistle was seen in writing If the amendment of manners be aimed at, look into Italy and Spain, whether those places be one scruple the better, the honester, the wiser, the chaster, since all the inquisitional rigour that hath been executed upon books.

Another reason, whereby to make it plain that

this order will miss the end it seeks, consider by the quality which ought to be in every licenser It cannot be denied, but that he who is made judge to sit upon the birth or death of books, whether they may be wafted into this world or not, had need to be a man above the common measure, both studious, learned, and judicious, there may be else no mean mistakes in the censure of what is passable or not, which is also no mean injury If he be of such worth as behoves him, there cannot be a more tedious and unpleasing journeywork, a greater loss of time levied upon his head, than to be made the perpetual reader of unchosen books and pamphlets, ofttimes huge volumes There is no book that is acceptable, unless at certain seasons, but to be enjoined the reading of that at all times, and in a hand scarce legible, whereof three pages would not down at any time in the fairest print, is an imposition I cannot believe how he that values time, and his own studies, or is but of a sensible nostril, should be able to endure In this one thing I crave leave of the present licensers to be pardoned for so thinking who doubtless took this office up, looking on it through their obedience to the parliament, whose command perhaps made all things seem easy and unlaborious to them, but that this short trial hath wearied them out already, their own expressions and excuses to them who make so many journeys to solicit their licence, are testimony enough Seeing therefore those who now possess the employment by all

evident signs wish themselves well rid of it, and that no man of worth, none that is not a plain unthrift of his own hours, is ever likely to succeed them, except he mean to put himself to the salary of a press corrector, we may easily foresee what kind of licensers we are to expect hereafter, either ignorant, imperious, and remiss, or basely pecuniary This is what I had to show, wherein this order cannot conduce to that end whereof it bears the intention

I lastly proceed from the no good it can do, to the manifest hurt it causes, in being first the greatest discouragement and affront that can be offered to learning and to learned men It was the complaint and lamentation of prelates, upon every least of a motion to remove pluralities and distribute more equally church revenues, that then all learning would be for ever dashed and discouraged But as for that opinion, I never found cause to think that the tenth part of learning stood or fell with the clergy nor could I ever but hold it for a sordid and unworthy speech of any churchman who had a competency left him. If therefore ye be loath to dishearten utterly and discontent, not the mercenary crew of false pretenders to learning, but the free and ingenuous sort of such as evidently were born to study and love learning for itself, not for lucre, or any other end, but the service of God and of truth, and perhaps that lasting fame and perpetuity of praise, which God and good men have consented shall be the reward of those whose

published labours advance the good of mankind · then know, that so far to distrust the judgment and the honesty of one who hath but a common repute in learning, and never yet offended, as not to count him fit to print his mind without a tutor and examiner, lest he should drop a schism, or something of corruption, is the greatest displeasure and indignity to a free and knowing spirit that can be put upon him

What advantage is it to be a man over it is to be a boy at school, if we have only escaped the ferula to come under the fescue of an imprimatur? if serious and elaborate writings, as if they were no more than the theme of a grammar-lad under his pedagogue, must not be uttered without the cursory eyes of a temporizing and extemporizing licenser? He who is not trusted with his own actions, his drift not being known to be evil, and standing to the hazard of law and penalty, has no great argument to think himself reputed in the commonwealth wherein he was born for other than a fool or a foreigner When a man writes to the world, he summons up all his reason and deliberation to assist him, he searches, meditates, is industrious, and likely consults and confers with his judicious friends, after all which done, he takes himself to be informed in what he writes as well as any that wrote before him, if in this, the most consummate act of his fidelity and ripeness, no years, no industry, no former proof of his abilities, can bring him to that state of maturity as not to be still

his book, as he ought to be, or else had better be silent, whenas all he teaches, all he delivers, is but under the tuition, under the correction of his patriarchal licenser, to blot or alter what precisely accords not with the hide-bound humour which he calls his judgment? When every acute reader, upon the first sight of a pedantic licence, will be ready with these like words to ding the book a quoit's distance from him — 'I hate a pupil teacher; I 'endure not an instructor that comes to me under 'the wardship of an overseeing fist I know nothing 'of the licenser, but that I have his own hand here 'for his arrogance; who shall warrant me his 'judgment?' 'The state, sir,' replies the stationer but has a quick return — 'The state shall be my 'governors, but not my critics, they may be mis-'taken in the choice of a licenser, as easily as this 'license may be mistaken in an author This is some 'common stuff' and he might add from Sir Francis Bacon, that 'such authorized books are but the 'language of the times' For though a licenser should happen to be judicious more than ordinary, which will be a great jeopardy of the next succession, yet his very office and his commission enjoins him to let pass nothing but what is vulgarly received already

Nay, which is more lamentable, if the work of any deceased author, though never so famous in his lifetime, and even to this day, comes to their hands for licence to be printed, or reprinted, if there be found in his book one sentence of a venturous edge, uttered in the height of zeal, (and who knows

numbers and such volumes as have now well-nigh made all other books unsaleable, should not be armour enough against one single Enchiridion, without the castle of St. Angelo of an imprimatur

And lest some should persuade ye, lords and commons, that these arguments of learned men's discouragement at this your order are mere flourishes, and not real, I could recount what I have seen and heard in other countries, where this kind of inquisition tyrannizes, when I have sat among their learned men, (for that honour I had,) and been counted happy to be born in such a place of philosophic freedom, as they supposed England was, while themselves did nothing but bemoan the servile condition into which learning amongst them was brought, that this was it which had damped the glory of Italian wits, that nothing had been there written now these many years but flattery and fustian There it was that I found and visited the famous Galileo, grown old, a prisoner to the inquisition, for thinking in astronomy otherwise than the Franciscan and Dominican licensers thought And though I knew that England then was groaning loudest under the prelatical yoke, nevertheless I took it as a pledge of future happiness, that other nations were so persuaded of her liberty

Yet was it beyond my hope, that those worthies were then breathing in her air who should be her leaders to such a deliverance as shall never be forgotten by any revolution of time that this world hath to finish When that was once begun, it was

some but a second tyranny over learning and will soon put it out of controversy that bishops and presbyters are the same to us, both name and thing

That those evils of prelaty which before from five or six and twenty sees were distributively charged upon the whole people will now light wholly upon learning, is not obscure to us whenas now the pastor of a small unlearned parish on the sudden shall be exalted archbishop over a large diocese of books, and yet not remove, but keep his other cure too, a mystical pluralist He who but of late cried down the sole ordination of every novice bachelor of art, and denied sole jurisdiction over the simplest parishioner, shall now at home in his private chair assume both these over worthiest and excellentest books and ablest authors that write them This is not the covenants and protestations that we have made This is not to put down prelacy, this is but to chop an episcopacy, this is but to translate the palace metropolitan from one kind of dominion into another, this is but an old canonical sleight of commuting our penance To startle thus betimes at a mere unlicensed pamphlet, will, after a while, be afraid of every conventicle, and a while after will make a conventicle of every Christian meeting

But I am certain that a state governed by the rules of justice and fortitude, or a church built and founded upon the rock of faith and true knowledge cannot be so pusillanimous. While things are yet

not constituted in religion, that freedom of writing should be restrained by a discipline imitated from the prelates, and learned by them from the inquisition, to shut us up all again into the breast of a licenser, must needs give cause of doubt and discouragement to all learned and religious men; who cannot but discern the fineness of this politic drift, and who are the contrivers; that while bishops were to be baited down, then all presses might be open; it was the people's birthright and privilege in time of parliament, it was the breaking forth of light

But now the bishops abrogated and voided out of the church, as if our reformation sought no more, but to make room for others into their seats under another name, the episcopal arts begin to bud again, the cruse of truth must run no more oil, liberty of printing must be enthralled again under a prelatical commission of twenty, the privilege of the people nullified, and, which is worse, the freedom of learning must groan again, and to her old fetters all this the parliament yet sitting Although their own late arguments and defences against the prelates might remember them that this obstructing violence meets for the most part with an event utterly opposite to the end which it drives at instead of suppressing sects and schisms it raises them and invests them with a reputation: 'The punishing of wits enhances their authority,' saith the Viscount St. Albans; 'and a forbidden 'writing is thought to be a certain spark of truth,

'that flies up in the faces of them who seek to tread 'it out' This order, therefore, may prove a nursing mother to sects, but I shall easily shew how it will be a stepdame to truth and first, by disenabling us to the maintenance of what is known already

Well knows he who uses to consider that our faith and knowledge thrives by exercise, as well as our limbs and complexion. Truth is compared in scripture to a streaming fountain; if her waters flow not in a perpetual progression, they sicken into a muddy pool of conformity and tradition A man may be a heretic in the truth, and if he believe things only because his pastor says so, or the assembly so determines, without knowing other reason, though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds becomes his heresy There is not any burden that some would gladlier post off to another than the charge and care of their religion There be, who knows not that there be? of protestants and professors who live and die in as arrant an implicit faith as any lay papist of Loretto.

A wealthy man, addicted to his pleasure and to his profits, finds religion to be a traffic so entangled, and of so many piddling accounts, that of all mysteries he cannot skill to keep a stock going upon that trade What should he do? Fain he would have the name to be religious, fain he would bear up with his neighbours in that. What does he therefore, but resolves to give over toiling, and to find himself out some factor, to whose care and credit he may commit the whole managing of his

delightful dream. What need they torture their heads with that which others have taken so strictly and so unalterably into their own purveying? These are the fruits which a dull ease and cessation of our knowledge will bring forth among the people How goodly and how to be wished were such an obedient unanimity as this! What a fine conformity would it starch us all into! Doubtless a staunch and solid piece of framework as any January could freeze together

Nor much better will be the consequence even among the clergy themselves it is no new thing never heard of before for a parochial minister, who has his reward and is at his Hercules' pillars in a warm benefice, to be easily inclinable, if he have nothing else that may rouse up his studies, to finish his circuit in an English Concordance and a topic folio, the gatherings and savings of a sober graduateship, a Harmony and a Catena, treading the constant round of certain common doctrinal heads, attended with their uses, motives, marks, and means, out of which, as out of an alphabet or sol-fa, by forming and transforming, joining and disjoining variously, a little bookcraft and two hours' meditation might furnish him unspeakably to the performance of more than a weekly charge of sermoning not to reckon up the infinite helps of interlinearies, breviaries, synopses, and other loitering gear But as for the multitude of sermons ready printed and piled up, on every text that is not difficult, our London trading St. Thomas in

urged it as wherewith to justify himself, that he preached in public, yet writing is more public than preaching, and more easy to refutation if need be, there being so many whose business and profession merely it is to be the champions of truth, which if they neglect, what can be imputed but their sloth or inability?

Thus much we are hindered and disinured by this course of licensing toward the true knowledge of what we seem to know. For how much it hurts and hinders the licensers themselves in the calling of their ministry, more than any secular employment, if they will discharge that office as they ought, so that of necessity they must neglect either the one duty or the other, I insist not, because it is a particular, but leave it to their own conscience, how they will decide it there

There is yet behind of what I purposed to lay open, the incredible loss and detriment that this plot of licensing puts us to More than if some enemy at sea should stop up all our havens, and ports, and creeks, it hinders and retards the importation of our richest merchandise,—truth nay, it was first established and put in practice by antichristian malice and mystery, on set purpose to extinguish, if it were possible, the light of reformation, and to settle falsehood, little differing from that policy wherewith the Turk upholds his Alcoran, by the prohibiting of printing It is not denied, but gladly confessed, we are to send our thanks and vows to heaven louder than most of

continue to do our obsequies to the torn body of our martyred saint

We boast our light, but if we look not wisely on the sun itself, it smites us into darkness Who can discern those planets that are oft combust, and those stars of brightest magnitude that rise and set with the sun, until the opposite motion of their orbs bring them to such a place in the firmament, where they may be seen evening or morning? The light which we have gained was given us, not to be ever staring on, but by it to discover onward things more remote from our knowledge. It is not the unfrocking of a priest, the unmitring of a bishop, and the removing him from off the presbyterian shoulders, that will make us a happy nation no, if other things as great in the church, and in the rule of life both economical and political, be not looked into and reformed, we have looked so long upon the blaze that Zuinglius and Calvin have beaconed up to us, that we are stark blind

There be who perpetually complain of schisms and sects, and make it such a calamity that any man dissents from their maxims It is their own pride and ignorance which causes the disturbing, who neither will hear with meekness, nor can convince, yet all must be suppressed which is not found in their Syntagma They are the troublers, they are the dividers of unity, who neglect and permit not others to unite those dissevered pieces which are yet wanting to the body of Truth To be still searching what we know not by what we

nation chosen before any other, that out of her, as out of Sion, should be proclaimed and sounded forth the first tidings and trumpet of reformation to all Europe? And had it not been the obstinate perverseness of our prelates against the divine and admirable spirit of Wicklef, to suppress him as a schismatic and innovator, perhaps neither the Bohemian Husse and Jerome, no, nor the name of Luther or of Calvin, had been ever known. the glory of reforming all our neighbours had been completely ours But now, as our obdurate clergy have with violence demeaned the matter, we are become hitherto the latest and the backwardest scholars of whom God offered to have made us the teachers

Now once again by all concurrence of signs, and by the general instinct of holy and devout men, as they daily and solemnly express their thoughts, God is decreeing to begin some new and great period in his church, even to the reforming of reformation itself, what does he then but reveal himself to his servants, and as his manner is, first to his Englishmen? I say, as his manner is, first to us, though we mark not the method of his counsels, and are unworthy. Behold now this vast city, a city of refuge, the mansion-house of liberty, encompassed and surrounded with his protection, the shop of war hath not there more anvils and hammers working, to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed justice in defence of beleaguered truth, than there be pens and heads

there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present, as with their homage and their fealty, the approaching reformation others as fast reading, trying all things, assenting to the force of reason and convincement

What could a man require more from a nation so pliant and so prone to seek after knowledge? What wants there to such a towardly and pregnant soil but wise and faithful labourers to make a knowing people, a nation of prophets, of sages, and of worthies? We reckon more than five months yet to harvest, there need not be five weeks, had we but eyes to lift up, the fields are white already Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making Under these fantastic terrors of sect and schism we wrong the earnest and zealous thirst after knowledge and understanding which God hath stirred up in this city What some lament of, we rather should rejoice at, should rather praise this pious forwardness among men to reassume the ill-deputed care of their religion into their own hands again A little generous prudence, a little forbearance of one another, and some grain of charity might win all these diligences to join and unite into one general and brotherly search after truth, could we but forego this prelatical tradition of crowding free consciences and Christian liberties into canons and

precepts of men I doubt not, if some great and worthy stranger should come among us, wise to discern the mould and temper of a people, and how to govern it, observing the high hopes and aims, the diligent alacrity of our extended thoughts and reasonings in the pursuance of truth and freedom, but that he would cry out as Pyrrhus did, admiring the Roman docility and courage, 'If 'such were my Epirots, I would not despair the 'greatest design that could be attempted to make 'a church or kingdom happy'

Yet these are the men cried out against for schismatics and sectaries, as if, while the temple of the Lord was building, some cutting, some squaring the marble, others hewing the cedars, there should be a sort of irrational men who could not consider there must be many schisms and many dissections made in the quarry and in the timber ere the house of God can be built. And when every stone is laid artfully together, it cannot be united into a continuity, it can but be contiguous in this world: neither can every piece of the building be of one form, nay, rather the perfection consists in this, that out of many moderate varieties and brotherly dissimilitudes that are not vastly disproportional arises the goodly and the graceful symmetry that commends the whole pile and structure

Let us therefore be more considerate builders, more wise in spiritual architecture, when great reformation is expected For now the time seems come, wherein Moses, the great prophet, may sit

in heaven rejoicing to see that memorable and glorious wish of his fulfilled, when not only our seventy elders but all the Lord's people are become prophets No marvel then though some men, and some good men too perhaps, but young in goodness, as Joshua then was, envy them They fret, and out of their own weakness are in agony, lest these divisions and subdivisions will undo us The adversary again applauds, and waits the hour when they have branched themselves out, saith he, small enough into parties and partitions, then will be our time Fool! he sees not the firm root, out of which we all grow, though into branches, nor will beware, until he see our small divided maniples cutting through at every angle of his ill-united and unwieldy brigade And that we are to hope better of all these supposed sects and schisms, and that we shall not need that solicitude, honest perhaps, though overtimorous, of them that vex in this behalf, but shall laugh in the end at those malicious applauders of our differences, I have these reasons to persuade me.

First, when a city shall be as it were besieged and blocked about, her navigable river infested, inroads and incursions round, defiance and battle oft rumoured to be marching up even to her walls and suburb trenches, that then the people, or the greater part, more than at other times, wholly taken up with the study of highest and most important matters to be reformed, should be disputing, reasoning, reading, inventing, discoursing, even to

a rarity and admiration, things not before discoursed or written of, argues first a singular good will, contentedness, and confidence in your prudent foresight, and safe government, lords and commons; and from thence derives itself to a gallant bravery and well-grounded contempt of their enemies, as if there were no small number of as great spirits among us as his was who, when Rome was nigh besieged by Hannibal, *being in the city*, bought that piece of ground at no cheap rate whereon Hannibal himself encamped his own regiment

Next, it is a lively and cheerful presage of our happy success and victory For as in a body when the blood is fresh, the spirits pure and vigorous, *not only to vital* but to rational faculties, and those in the acutest and the pertest operations of wit and subtlety, it argues in what good plight and constitution the body is, so when the cheerfulness of the people is so sprightly up, as that it has not only wherewith to guard well its own freedom and safety, but to spare, and to bestow upon the solidest and sublimest points of controversy and new invention, it betokens us not degenerated, nor drooping to a fatal decay, but casting off the old and wrinkled skin of corruption to outlive these pangs, and wax young again, entering the glorious ways of truth and prosperous virtue, destined to become great and honourable in these latter ages Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep,

us so, less the lovers, less the founders of our true liberty. We can grow ignorant again, brutish, formal, and slavish, as ye found us, but you then must first become that which ye cannot be, oppressive, arbitrary, and tyrannous, as they were from whom ye have freed us That our hearts are now more capacious, our thoughts more erected to the search and expectation of greatest and exactest things, is the issue of your own virtue propagated in us; ye cannot suppress that, unless ye reinforce an abrogated and merciless law, that fathers may dispatch at will their own children And who shall then stick closest to ye and excite others? Not he who takes up arms for coat and conduct,[1] and his four nobles of Danegelt Although I dispraise not the defence of just immunities, yet love my peace better, if that were all Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties

What would be best advised then, if it be found so hurtful and so unequal to suppress opinions for the newness or the unsuitableness to a customary acceptance, will not be my task to say; I shall only repeat what I have learned from one of your own honourable number, a right noble and pious lord, who had he not sacrificed his life and fortunes to the church and commonwealth, we had not now missed and bewailed a worthy and undoubted patron of this argument Ye know him, I am sure; yet I for honour's sake, and may it be eternal

[1] Taxation for the clothing and conveyance of troops.—Ed

surest suppressing He who hears what praying there is for light and clear knowledge to be sent down among us, would think of other matters to be constituted beyond the discipline of Geneva, framed and fabricated already to our hands

Yet when the new light which we beg for shines in upon us, there be who envy and oppose, if it come not first in at their casements What a collusion is this, whenas we are exhorted by the wise man to use diligence, 'to seek for wisdom as for 'hidden treasures,' early and late, that another order shall enjoin us to know nothing but by statute? When a man hath been labouring the hardest labour in the deep mines of knowledge, hath furnished out his findings in all their equipage, drawn forth his reasons as it were a battle ranged, scattered and defeated all objections in his way, calls out his adversary into the plain, offers him the advantage of wind and sun, if he please, only that he may try the matter by dint of argument; for his opponents then to skulk, to lay ambushments, to keep a narrow bridge of licensing where the challenger should pass, though it be valour enough in soldiership, is but weakness and cowardice in the wars of truth For who knows not that Truth is strong, next to the Almighty; she needs no policies, nor stratagems, nor licensings to make her victorious, those are the shifts and the defences that error uses against her power, give her but room, and do not bind her when she sleeps, for then she speaks not true, as the old Proteus did,

who spoke oracles only when he was caught and bound, but then rather she turns herself into all shapes except her own, and perhaps tunes her voice according to the time, as Micaiah did before Ahab until she be adjured into her own likeness

Yet is it not impossible that she may have more shapes than one What else is all that rank of things indifferent, wherein truth may be on this side or on the other without being unlike herself What but a vain shadow else is the abolition of 'those ordinances, that hand-writing nailed to the 'cross,' what great purchase is this Christian liberty which Paul so often boasts of? His doctrine is, that he who eats or eats not, regards a day or regards it not, may do either to the Lord How many other things might be tolerated in peace, and left to conscience, had we but charity, and were it not the chief stronghold of our hypocrisy to be ever judging one another? I fear yet this iron yoke of outward conformity hath left a slavish print upon our necks, the ghost of a linen decency yet haunts us We stumble, and are impatient at the least dividing of one visible congregation from another, though it be not in fundamentals, and through our forwardness to suppress, and our backwardness to recover any enthralled piece of truth out of the gripe of custom, we care not to keep truth separated from truth, which is the fiercest rent and disunion of all We do not see that while we still affect by all means a rigid external formality, we may as soon fall again into a gross conforming stupidity, a stark

and dead congealment of 'wood and hay and 'stubble' forced and frozen together, which is more to the sudden degenerating of a church than many subdichotomies of petty schisms.

Not that I can think well of every light separation, or that all in a church is to be expected 'gold and silver and precious stones' it is not possible for man to sever the wheat from the tares, the good fish from the other fry, that must be the angels' ministry at the end of mortal things Yet if all cannot be of one mind, as who looks they should be? this doubtless is more wholesome, more prudent, and more Christian, that many be tolerated rather than all compelled I mean not tolerated popery, and open superstition, which as it extirpates all religions and civil supremacies, so itself should be extirpate, provided first that all charitable and compassionate means be used to win and regain the weak and the misled that also which is impious or evil absolutely either against faith or manners no law can possibly permit that intends not to unlaw itself but those neighbouring differences, or rather indifferences, are what I speak of, whether in some point of doctrine or of discipline, which though they may be many, yet need not interrupt the unity of spirit, if we could but find among us the bond of peace

In the meanwhile, if any one would write, and bring his helpful hand to the slow-moving reformation which we labour under, if truth have spoken to him before others, or but seemed at least to

speak, who hath so bejesuited us that we should trouble that man with asking licence to do so worthy a deed? and not consider this, that if it come to prohibiting, there is not aught more likely to be prohibited than truth itself whose first appearance to our eyes, bleared and dimmed with prejudice and custom, is more unsightly and unplausible than many errors; even as the person is of many a great man slight and contemptible to see to And what do they tell us vainly of new opinions, when this very opinion of theirs, that none must be heard but whom they like, is the worst and newest opinion of all others; and is the chief cause why sects and schisms do so much abound, and true knowledge is kept at distance from us? Besides yet a greater danger which is in it for when God shakes a kingdom with strong and healthful commotions to a general reforming, it is not untrue that many sectaries and false teachers are then busiest in seducing, but yet more true it is that God then raises to his own work men of rare abilities and more than common industry, not only to look back and revive what hath been taught heretofore, but to gain further, and to go on some new enlightened steps in the discovery of truth For such is the order of God's enlightening his church, to dispense and deal out by degrees his beam, so as our earthly eyes may best sustain it Neither is God appointed and confined, where and out of what place these his chosen shall be first heard to speak; for he sees

not as man sees, chooses not as man chooses, lest we should devote ourselves again to set places and assemblies, and outward callings of men, planting our faith one while in the old convocation house, and another while in the chapel at Westminster; when all the faith and religion that shall be there canonized is not sufficient without plain convincement, and the charity of patient instruction, to supple the least bruise of conscience, to edify the meanest Christian who desires to walk in the spirit, and not in the letter of human trust, for all the number of voices that can be there made, no, though Harry the Seventh himself there, with all his liege tombs about him, should lend them voices from the dead to swell their number

And if the men be erroneous who appear to be the leading schismatics, what withholds us but our sloth, our self-will, and distrust in the right cause, that we do not give them gentle meetings and gentle dismissions, that we debate not and examine the matter thoroughly with liberal and frequent audience, if not for their sakes yet for our own? Seeing no man who hath tasted learning, but will confess the many ways of profiting by those who, not contented with stale receipts, are able to manage and set forth new positions to the world. And were they but as the dust and cinders of our feet, so long as in that notion they may yet serve to polish and brighten the armoury of truth, even for that respect they were not utterly to be cast away. But if they be of those whom God hath

fitted for the special use of these times with eminent and ample gifts, and those perhaps neither among the priests nor among the pharisees, and we, in the haste of a precipitant zeal, shall make no distinction, but resolve to stop their mouths, because we fear they come with new and dangerous opinions, as we commonly forejudge them ere we understand them; no less than woe to us, while, thinking thus to defend the gospel, we are found the persecutors!

There have been not a few since the beginning of this parliament, both of the presbytery and others, who by their unlicensed books to the contempt of an imprimatur first broke that triple ice clung about our hearts, and taught the people to see day; I hope that none of those were the persuaders to renew upon us this bondage which they themselves have wrought so much good by contemning. But if neither the check that Moses gave to young Joshua, nor the countermand which our Saviour gave to young John, who was so ready to prohibit those whom he thought unlicensed, be not enough to admonish our elders how unacceptable to God their testy mood of prohibiting is; if neither their own remembrance what evil hath abounded in the church by this lett of licensing, and what good they themselves have begun by transgressing it, be not enough, but that they will persuade and execute the most Dominican part of the inquisition over us, and are already with one foot in the stirrup so active at suppressing, it would be no unequal distribution in the first place to suppress the

suppressors themselves, whom the change of their condition hath puffed up, more than their late experience of harder times hath made wise

And as for regulating the press, let no man think to have the honour of advising ye better than yourselves have done in that order published next before this, 'That no book be printed, unless the printer's 'and the author's name, or at least the printer's be 'registered' Those which otherwise come forth, if they be found mischievous and libellous, the fire and the executioner will be the timeliest and the most effectual remedy that man's prevention can use For this authentic Spanish policy of licensing books, if I have said aught, will prove the most unlicensed book itself within a short while, and was the immediate image of a star-chamber decree to that purpose made in those times when that court did the rest of those her pious works, for which she is now fallen from the stars with Lucifer Whereby ye may guess what kind of state prudence, what love of the people, what care of religion or good manners there was at the contriving, although with singular hypocrisy it pretended to bind books to their good behaviour And how it got the upper hand of your precedent order so well constituted before, if we may believe those men whose profession gives them cause to inquire most, it may be doubted there was in it the fraud of some old patentees and monopolizers in the trade of bookselling, who, under pretence of the poor in their company not to be defrauded, and the just retaining

of each man his several copy, (which God forbid should be gainsaid,) brought divers glossing colours to the House, which were indeed but colours, and serving to no end except it be to exercise a superiority over their neighbours; men who do not therefore labour in an honest profession, to which learning is indebted, that they should be made other men's vassals. Another end is thought was aimed at by some of them in procuring by petition this order, that having power in their hands, malignant books might the easier escape abroad, as the event shews. But of these sophisms and elenchs of merchandise I skill not: this I know, that errors in a good government and in a bad are equally almost incident; for what magistrate may not be misinformed, and much the sooner, if liberty of printing be reduced into the power of a few? But to redress willingly and speedily what hath been erred, and in highest authority to esteem a plain advertisement more than others have done a sumptuous bribe, is a virtue, honoured lords and commons, answerable to your highest actions, and whereof none can participate but greatest and wisest men.

THE TENURE OF KINGS AND MAGISTRATES

PROVING THAT IT IS LAWFUL, AND HATH BEEN HELD SO THROUGH ALL AGES, FOR ANY WHO HAVE THE POWER TO CALL TO ACCOUNT A TYRANT OR WICKED KING, AND AFTER DUE CONVICTION TO DEPOSE AND PUT HIM TO DEATH, IF THE ORDINARY MAGISTRATE HAVE NEGLECTED OR DENIED TO DO IT AND THAT THEY WHO OF LATE SO MUCH BLAME DEPOSING ARE THE MEN THAT DID IT THEMSELVES. 1649

friendly letter of advice, for fashion's sake in private, and forthwith published by the sender himself, that we may know how much of friend there was in it, to cast an odious envy upon them to whom it was pretended to be sent in charity. Nor let any man be deluded by either the ignorance or the notorious hypocrisy and self repugnance of our dancing divines, who have the conscience and the boldness to come with scripture in their mouths, glossed and fitted for their turns with a double contradictory sense, transforming the sacred verity of God to an idol with two faces, looking at once two several ways, and with the same quotations to charge others which in the same case they made serve to justify themselves. For while the hope to be made classic and provincial lords led them on, while pluralities greased them thick and deep, to the shame and scandal of religion, more than all the sects and heresies they exclaim against; then to fight against the king's person, and no less a party of his lords and commons, or to put force upon both the Houses, was good, was lawful, was no resisting of superior powers; they only were powers not to be resisted who countenanced the good and punished the evil.

But now that their censorious domineering is not suffered to be universal, truth and conscience to be freed, tithes and pluralities to be no more, though competent allowance provided, and the warm experience of large gifts, and they so good at taking them; yet now to exclude and seize upon im

peached members, to bring delinquents without exemption to a fair tribunal by the common national law against murder, is now to be no less than Korah, Dathan, and Abiram He who but erewhile in the pulpits was a cursed tyrant, an enemy to God and saints, laden with all the innocent blood spilt in three kingdoms, and so to be fought against, is now, though nothing penitent or altered from his first principles, a lawful magistrate, a sovereign lord, the Lord's anointed, not to be touched, though by themselves imprisoned As if this only were obedience, to preserve the mere useless bulk of his person, and that only in prison, not in the field, not to disobey his commands, deny him his dignity and office, everywhere to resist his power, but where they think it only surviving in their own faction

But who in particular is a tyrant, cannot be determined in a general discourse otherwise than by supposition, his particular charge, and the sufficient proof of it, must determine that which I leave to magistrates, at least to the uprighter sort of them, and of the people, though in number less by many, in whom faction least hath prevailed above the law of nature and right reason, to judge as they find cause But this I dare own as part of my faith, that if such a one there be, by whose commission whole massacres have been committed on his faithful subjects, his provinces offered to pawn or alienation, as the hire of those whom he had solicited to come in and destroy whole cities

and countries; be he king, or tyrant, or emperor, the sword of justice is above him; in whose hand soever is found sufficient power to avenge the effusion, and so great a deluge of innocent blood. For if all human power to execute, not accidentally but intendedly, the wrath of God upon evil-doers without exception, be of God, then that power, whether ordinary, or if that fail, extraordinary, so executing that intent of God, is lawful, and not to be resisted. But to unfold more at large this whole question, though with all expedient brevity, I shall here set down, from first beginning, the original of kings, how and wherefore exalted to that dignity above their brethren, and from thence shall prove, that turning to tyranny they may be as lawfully deposed and punished as they were first elected. this I shall do by authorities and reasons, not learnt in corners among schisms and heresies, as our doubling divines are ready to calumniate, but fetched out of the midst of choicest and most authentic learning, and no prohibited authors, nor many heathen, but Mosaical, Christian, orthodoxal, and, which must needs be more convincing to our adversaries, presbyterial.

No man who knows aught can be so stupid to deny that all men naturally were born free, being the image and resemblance of God himself, and were, by privilege above all the creatures, born to command and not to obey and that they lived so, till from the root of Adam's transgression

falling among themselves to do wrong and violence, and foreseeing that such courses must needs tend to the destruction of them all, they agreed by common league to bind each other from mutual injury, and jointly to defend themselves against any that gave disturbance or opposition to such agreement. Hence came cities, towns, and commonwealths And because no faith in all was found sufficiently binding, they saw it needful to ordain some authority that might restrain by force and punishment what was violated against peace and common right

This authority and power of self defence and preservation being originally and naturally in every one of them, and unitedly in them all, for ease, for order, and lest each man should be his own partial judge, they communicated and derived either to one, whom for the eminence of his wisdom and integrity they chose above the rest, or to more than one, whom they thought of equal deserving the first was called a king, the other, magistrates not to be their lords and masters, (though afterward those names in some places were given voluntarily to such as had been authors of inestimable good to the people,) but to be their deputies and commissioners, to execute, by virtue of their intrusted power, that justice which else every man by the bond of nature and of covenant must have executed for himself and for one another And to him that shall consider well why among free persons one man by civil right should

bear authority and jurisdiction over another, no other end or reason can be imaginable

These for a time governed well, and with much equity decided all things at their own arbitrement, till the temptation of such a power, left absolute in their hands, perverted them at length to injustice and partiality. Then did they, who now by trial had found the danger and inconveniencies of committing arbitrary power to any, invent laws, either framed or consented to by all, that should confine and limit the authority of whom they chose to govern them that so man, of whose failing they had proof, might no more rule over them, but law and reason, abstracted as much as might be from personal errors and frailties 'While, as the magistrate was set above the 'people, so the law was set above the magistrate' When this would not serve, but that the law was either not executed, or misapplied, they were constrained from that time, the only remedy left them, to put conditions and take oaths from all kings and magistrates at their first instalment, to do impartial justice by law: who upon those terms and no other received allegiance from the people, that is to say, bond or covenant to obey them in execution of those laws, which they, the people, had themselves made or assented to And this ofttimes with express warning, that if the king or magistrate proved unfaithful to his trust, the people would be disengaged They added also counsellors and parliaments, not to be only at his beck,

but, with him or without him, at set times, or at all times when any danger threatened, to have care of the public safety. Therefore saith Claudius Sesell, a French statesman, 'The parliament was 'set as a bridle to the king;' which I instance rather, not because our English lawyers have not said the same long before, but because that French monarchy is granted by all to be a far more absolute one than ours. That this and the rest of what hath hitherto been spoken is most true, might be copiously made appear through all stories, heathen and Christian; even of those nations where kings and emperors have sought means to abolish all ancient memory of the people's right by their encroachments and usurpations. But I spare long insertions, appealing to the German, French, Italian, Arragonian, English, and not least the Scottish histories: not forgetting this only by the way, that William the Norman, though a conqueror, and not unsworn at his coronation, was compelled a second time to take oath at St Alban's ere the people would be brought to yield obedience.

It being thus manifest that the power of kings and magistrates is nothing else but what is only derivative, transferred, and committed to them in trust from the people to the common good of them all, in whom the power yet remains fundamentally, and cannot be taken from them without a violation of their natural birthright; and seeing that from hence Aristotle, and the best of political writers, have defined a king, 'him who governs to the

'good and profit of his people, and not for his own 'ends,' it follows from necessary causes that the titles of sovereign lord, natural lord, and the like, are either arrogancies or flatteries, not admitted by emperors and kings of best note, and disliked by the church both of Jews (Isa. xxvi. 13) and ancient Christians, as appears by Tertullian and others. Although generally the people of Asia, and with them the Jews also, especially since the time they chose a king against the advice and counsel of God, are noted by wise authors much inclinable to slavery.

Secondly, that to say, as is usual, the king hath as good right to his crown and dignity as any man to his inheritance, is to make the subject no better than the king's slave, his chattel, or his possession that may be bought and sold, and doubtless, if hereditary title were sufficiently inquired, the best foundation of it would be found but either in courtesy or convenience. But suppose it to be of right hereditary, what can be more just and legal, if a subject for certain crimes be to forfeit by law from himself and posterity all his inheritance to the king, than that a king, for crimes proportional, should forfeit all his title and inheritance to the people? Unless the people must be thought created all for him, he not for them, and they all in one body inferior to him single; which were a kind of treason against the dignity of mankind to affirm.

Thirdly, it follows that to say kings are accountable to none but God, is the overturning of

all law and government For if they may refuse to give account, then all covenants made with them at coronation, all oaths are in vain, and mere mockeries, all laws which they swear to keep, made to no purpose for if the king fear not God, (as how many of them do not,) we hold then our lives and estates by the tenure of his mere grace and mercy, as from a god, not a mortal magistrate, a position that none but court-parasites or men besotted would maintain Aristotle, therefore, whom we commonly allow for one of the best interpreters of nature and morality, writes in the fourth of his Politics, chap x, that 'monarchy 'unaccountable is the worst sort of tyranny, and 'least of all to be endured by free-born men'

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Therefore kingdom and magistracy, whether supreme or subordinate, is called 'a human or-'dinance,' (1 Pet ii 13, &c,) which we are there taught is the will of God we should submit to, so far as for the punishment of evil-doers, and the encouragement of them that do well 'Submit,' saith he, 'as free men' But to any civil power unaccountable, unquestionable, and not to be resisted, no, not in wickedness and violent actions, how can we submit as free men? 'There is no 'power but of God,' saith Paul, (Rom xiii,) as much as to say, God put it into man's heart to find out that way at first for common peace and preservation, approving the exercise thereof, else it contradicts Peter, who calls the same authority an

ordinance of man. It must be also understood of lawful and just power, else we read of great power in the affairs and kingdoms of the world permitted to the devil: for saith he to Christ, (Luke, iv. 6,) 'All this power will I give thee, and the glory of 'them, for it is delivered to me, and to whomsoever 'I will I give it:' neither did he lie, or Christ gainsay what he affirmed; for in the thirteenth of the Revelation we read how the dragon gave to the beast his power, his seat, and great authority: which beast so authorized most expound to be the tyrannical powers and kingdoms of the earth. Therefore Saint Paul in the forecited chapter tells us that such magistrates he means as are not a terror to the good, but to the evil; such as bear not the sword in vain, but to punish offenders, and to encourage the good.

If such only be mentioned here as powers to be obeyed, and our submission to them only required, then doubtless those powers that do the contrary are no powers ordained of God; and by consequence no obligation laid upon us to obey or not to resist them. And it may be well observed, that both these apostles, whenever they give this precept, express it in terms not concrete, but abstract, as logicians are wont to speak; that is, they mention the ordinance, the power, the authority, before the persons that execute it; and what that power is, lest we should be deceived, they describe exactly. So that if the power be not such, or the person execute not such power, neither the one nor

the other is of God, but of the devil, and by consequence to be resisted. From this exposition Chrysostom also, on the same place, dissents not; explaining that these words were not written in behalf of a tyrant. And this is verified by David, himself a king, and likeliest to be author of the Psalm (xciv. 20) which saith, 'Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee?' And it were worth the knowing,—since kings in these days, and that by Scripture, boast the justness of their title by holding it immediately of God, yet cannot shew the time when God ever set on the throne them or their forefathers, but only when the people chose them;—why by the same reason, since God ascribes as oft to himself the casting down of princes from the throne, it should not be thought as lawful, and as much from God, when none are seen to do it but the people, and that for just causes. For if it needs must be a sin in them to depose, it may as likely be a sin to have elected. And contrary, if the people's act in election be pleaded by a king as the act of God, and the most just title to enthrone him, why may not the people's act of rejection be as well pleaded by the people as the act of God, and the most just reason to depose him? So that we see the title and just right of reigning or deposing, in reference to God, is found in Scripture to be all one; visible only in the people, and depending merely upon justice and demerit. Thus far hath been considered chiefly the power of kings and magistrates, how it was

and is originally the people's, and by them conferred in trust only to be employed to the common peace and benefit, with liberty therefore and right remaining in them to reassume it to themselves, if by kings or magistrates it be abused, or to dispose of it by any alteration, as they shall judge most conducing to the public good

We may from hence with more ease and force of argument determine what a tyrant is, and what the people may do against him A tyrant, whether by wrong or by right coming to the crown, is he who, regarding neither law nor the common good, reigns only for himself and his faction thus St Basil, among other, defines him And because his power is great, his will boundless and exorbitant, the fulfilling whereof is for the most part accompanied with innumerable wrongs and oppressions of the people, murders, massacres, rapes, adulteries, desolation and subversion of cities and whole provinces, look how great a good and happiness a just king is, so great a mischief is a tyrant, as he the public father of his country, so this the common enemy Against whom what the people lawfully may do, as against a common pest and destroyer of mankind, I suppose no man of clear judgment need go further to be guided than by the very principles of nature in him

But because it is the vulgar folly of men to desert their own reason, and shutting their eyes, to think they see best with other men's, I shall show, by such examples as ought to have most

weight with us, what hath been done in this case heretofore The Greeks and Romans, as their prime authors witness, held it not only lawful but a glorious and heroic deed, rewarded publicly with statues and garlands, to kill an infamous tyrant at any time without trial, and but reason, that he who trod down all law should not be vouchsafed the benefit of the law Insomuch that Seneca the tragedian brings in Hercules, the grand suppressor of tyrants, thus speaking —

> Victima haud ulla amplior
> Potest magisque opima mactari Jovi
> Quam rex iniquus
>
> There can be slain
> No sacrifice to God more acceptable
> Than an unjust and wicked king

But of these I name no more, lest it be objected they were heathen, and come to produce another sort of men, that had the knowledge of true religion Among the Jews this custom of tyrant-killing was not unusual First, Ehud, a man whom God had raised to deliver Israel from Eglon king of Moab, who had conquered and ruled over them eighteen years, being sent to him as an ambassador with a present, slew him in his own house 'But he was a foreign prince, an enemy, 'and Ehud besides had special warrant from God' To the first I answer, it imports not whether foreign or native for no prince so native but professes to hold by law, which when he himself overturns, breaking all the covenants and oaths

that gave title to his dignity, and were the bond and alliance between him and his people, what differs he from an outlandish king, or from an enemy? For look how much right the king of Spain hath to govern us at all, so much right hath the king of England to govern us tyrannically. If he, though not bound to us by any league, coming from Spain in person to subdue us or to destroy us, might lawfully by the people of England either be slain in fight or put to death in captivity, what hath a native king to plead, bound by so many covenants, benefits, and honours, to the welfare of his people, why he through the contempt of all laws and parliaments, the only tie of our obedience to him, for his own will's sake, and a boasted prerogative unaccountable, after seven years' warring and destroying of his best subjects, overcome, and yielded prisoner, should think to scape unquestionable, as a thing divine, in respect of whom so many thousand Christians destroyed should lie unaccounted for, polluting with their slaughtered carcasses all the land over, and crying for vengeance against the living that should have righted them? Who knows not that there is a mutual bond of amity and brotherhood between man and man over all the world, neither is it the English sea that can sever us from that duty and relation: a straiter bond there is between fellow-subjects, neighbours, and friends. But when any of these do one to another so as hostility could do no worse, what doth the law decree less against them than open enemies

was raised by God to be a deliverer, and went on just principles, such as were then and ever held allowable to deal so by a tyrant that could no otherwise be dealt with.

Neither did Samuel, though a prophet, with his own hand abstain from Agag, a foreign enemy no doubt; but mark the reason: 'As thy sword hath 'made women childless;' a cause that by the sentence of law itself nullifies all relations. And as the law is between brother and brother, father and son, master and servant, wherefore not between king, or rather tyrant, and people? And whereas Jehu had special command to slay Jehoram, a successive and hereditary tyrant, it seems not the less imitable for that; for where a thing grounded so much on natural reason hath the addition of a command from God, what does it but establish the lawfulness of such an act? Nor is it likely that God, who had so many ways of punishing the house of Ahab, would have sent a subject against his prince, if the fact in itself, as done to a tyrant, had been of bad example. And if David refused to lift his hand against the Lord's anointed, the matter between them was not tyranny, but private enmity, and David, as a private person, had been his own revenger, not so much the people's: but when any tyrant at this day can shew himself to be the Lord's anointed, the only mentioned reason why David withheld his hand, he may then, but not till then, presume on the same privilege.

We may pass, therefore, hence to Christian

times And first, our Saviour himself, how much he favoured tyrants, and how much intended they should be found or honoured among Christians, declared his mind not obscurely, accounting their absolute authority no better than Gentilism, yea, though they flourished it over with the splendid name of benefactors, charging those that would be his disciples to usurp no such dominion, but that they who were to be of most authority among them should esteem themselves ministers and servants to the public Matt xx 25 'The princes 'of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them,' and Mark x 42 'They that seem to rule,' saith he, either slighting or accounting them no lawful rulers, 'but ye shall not be so, but the greatest 'among you shall be your servant' And although he himself were the meekest, and came on earth to be so, yet to a tyrant we hear him not vouchsafe an humble word, but, 'Tell that fox,' Luke xiii So far we ought to be from thinking that Christ and his gospel should be made a sanctuary for tyrants from justice, to whom his law before never gave such protection And wherefore did his mother, the Virgin Mary, give such praise to God in her prophetic song, that he had now, by the coming of Christ, cut down dynastas, or proud monarchs, from the throne, if the church, when God manifests his power in them to do so, should rather choose all misery and vassalage to serve them, and let them still sit on their potent seats to be adored for doing mischief?

Surely it is not for nothing that tyrants, by a kind of natural instinct, both hate and fear none more than the true church and saints of God, as the most dangerous enemies and subverters of monarchy, though indeed of tyranny; hath not this been the perpetual cry of courtiers and court-prelates? whereof no likelier cause can be alleged but that they well discerned the mind and principles of most devout and zealous men, and indeed the very discipline of church, tending to the dissolution of all tyranny. No marvel then if since the faith of Christ received, in purer or impurer times, to depose a king and put him to death for tyranny hath been accounted so just and requisite that neighbour kings have both upheld and taken part in the action. And Ludovicus Pius, himself an emperor, and son of Charles the Great, being made judge (du Haillan is my author) between Milegast, king of the Vultzes, and his subjects, who had deposed him, gave his verdict for the subjects, and for him whom they had chosen in his room. Note here that the right of electing whom they please is, by the impartial testimony of an emperor, in the people: for, said he, 'A just prince ought to 'be preferred before an unjust, and the end of 'government before the prerogative.'

And Constantinus Leo, another emperor, in the Byzantine laws saith, 'That the end of a king is 'for the general good, which he not performing is 'but the counterfeit of a king.' And to prove that some of our own monarchs have acknowledged

that their high office exempted them not from punishment, they had the sword of St Edward borne before them by an officer, who was called earl of the palace, even at the times of their highest pomp and solemnities, to mind them, saith Matthew Paris, the best of our historians, 'that if they erred, the sword had power to restrain 'them' And what restraint the sword comes to at length, having both edge and point, if any sceptic will doubt, let him feel It is also affirmed from diligent search made in our ancient books of law, that the peers and barons of England had a legal right to judge the king which was the cause most likely, (for it could be no slight cause,) that they were called his peers, or equals This, however, may stand immovable, so long as man hath to deal with no better than man, that if our law judge all men to the lowest by their peers, it should, in all equity, ascend also, and judge the highest

And so much I find both in our own and foreign story, that dukes, earls, and marquises were at first not hereditary, not empty and vain titles, but names of trust and office, and with the office ceasing, as induces me to be of opinion that every worthy man in parliament, (for the word baron imports no more,) might for the public good be thought a fit peer and judge of the king, without regard had to petty caveats and circumstances, the chief impediment in high affairs, and ever stood upon most by circumstantial men Whence doubt-

less our ancestors who were not ignorant with what rights either nature or ancient constitution had endowed them, when oaths both at coronation and renewed in parliament would not serve, thought it no way illegal to depose and put to death their tyrannous kings. Insomuch that the parliament drew up a charge against Richard the Second, and the commons requested to have judgment decreed against him, that the realm might not be endangered. And Peter Martyr, a divine of foremost rank, on the third of Judges approves their doings. Sir Thomas Smith also, a protestant, and a statesman, in his Commonwealth of England, putting the question, 'whether it be lawful to rise 'against a tyrant,' answers, 'that the vulgar 'judge of it according to the event, and the learned 'according to the purpose of them that do it.'

But far before those days, Gildas, the most ancient of all our historians, speaking of those times wherein the Roman empire decaying quitted and relinquished what right they had by conquest to this island, and resigned it all into the people's hands, testifies that the people thus reinvested with their own original right, about the year 446, both elected them kings whom they thought best, (the first Christian British kings that ever reigned here since the Romans,) and by the same right, when they apprehended cause, usually deposed and put them to death. This is the most fundamental and ancient tenure that any king of England can produce or pretend to, in comparison of which, all

other titles and pleas are but of yesterday. If any object that Gildas condemns the Britons for so doing, the answer is as ready; that he condemns them no more for so doing than he did before for choosing such; for, saith he, 'They anointed 'them kings not of God, but such as were more 'bloody than the rest.' Next, he condemns them not at all for deposing or putting them to death, but for doing it over hastily, without trial or well examining the cause, and for electing others worse in their room.

Thus we have here both domestic and most ancient examples, that the people of Britain have deposed and put to death their kings in those primitive Christian times. And to couple reason with example, if the church in all ages, primitive, Romish, or protestant, held it ever no less their duty than the power of their keys, though without express warrant of Scripture, to bring indifferently both king and peasant under the utmost rigour of their canons and censures ecclesiastical, even to the smiting him with a final excommunion, if he persist impenitent; what hinders but that the temporal law both may and ought, though without a special text or precedent, extend with like indifference the civil sword, to the cutting off, without exemption, him that capitally offends, seeing that justice and religion are from the same God, and works of justice ofttimes more acceptable? Yet because that some lately, with the tongues and arguments of malignant backsliders, have

written that the proceedings now in parliament against the king are without precedent from any protestant state or kingdom, the examples which follow shall be all protestant, and chiefly presbyterian

In the year 1546, the Duke of Saxony, Landgrave of Hesse, and the whole protestant league, raised open war against Charles the Fifth, their emperor, sent him a defiance, renounced all faith and allegiance toward him, and debated long in council whether they should give him so much as the title of Cæsar Let all men judge what this wanted of deposing or of killing, but the power to do it.

In the year 1559, the Scots protestants claiming promise of their queen regent for liberty of conscience, she answering that promises were not to be claimed of princes beyond what was commodious for them to grant, told her to her face in the parliament then at Sterling that if it were so they renounced their obedience; and soon after betook them to arms Certainly, when allegiance is renounced, that very hour the king or queen is in effect deposed

In the year 1564, John Knox, a most famous divine, and the reformer of Scotland to the presbyterian discipline, at a general assembly maintained openly, in a dispute against Lethington the secretary of state, that subjects might and ought to execute God's judgments upon their king, that the fact of Jehu and others against their king, having the ground of God's ordinary command to

put such and such offenders to death, was not extraordinary, but to be imitated of all that preferred the honour of God to the affection of flesh and wicked princes, that kings, if they offend have no privilege to be exempted from the punishments of law more than any other subject so that if the king be a murderer, adulterer, or idolater, he should suffer, not as a king but as an offender; and this position he repeats again and again before them Answerable was the opinion of John Craig, another learned divine, and that laws made by the tyranny of princes, or the negligence of people, their posterity might abrogate, and reform all things according to the original institution of commonwealths And Knox being commanded by the nobility to write to Calvin and other learned men for their judgments in that question, refused, alleging that both himself was fully resolved in conscience, and had heard their judgments, and had the same opinion under handwriting of many the most godly and most learned that he knew in Europe, that if he should move the question to them again, what should he do but show his own forgetfulness or inconstancy? All this is far more largely in the ecclesiastical history of Scotland, (l iv) with many other passages to this effect all the book over, set out with diligence by Scotsmen of best repute among them at the beginning of these troubles, as if they laboured to inform us what we were to do, and what they intended upon the like occasion.

And to let the world know that the whole church and protestant state of Scotland in those purest times of reformation were of the same belief, three years after, they met in the field Mary their lawful and hereditary queen, took her prisoner, yielding before fight, kept her in prison, and the same year deposed her

And four years after that, the Scots, in justification of their deposing Queen Mary, sent ambassadors to Queen Elizabeth, and in a written declaration alleged, that they had used towards her more lenity than she deserved, that their ancestors had heretofore punished their kings by death or banishment, that the Scots were a free nation, made king whom they freely chose, and with the same freedom unkinged him if they saw cause, by right of ancient laws and ceremonies yet remaining, and old customs yet among the highlanders in choosing the head of their clans or families; all which, with many other arguments, bore witness that regal power was nothing else but a mutual covenant or stipulation between king and people. These were Scotchmen and presbyterians but what measure then have they lately offered, to think such liberty less beseeming us than themselves, presuming to put him upon us for a master whom their law scarce allows to be their own equal? If now then we hear them in another strain than heretofore in the purest times of their church, we may be confident it is the voice of faction speaking in them, not of truth and reformation Which no less in

England than in Scotland, by the mouths of those faithful witnesses commonly called puritans and non-conformists, spake as clearly for the putting down, yea, the utmost punishing of kings, as in their several treatises may be read, even from the first reign of Elizabeth to these times Insomuch that one of them, whose name was Gibson, foretold King James he should be rooted out, and conclude his race, if he persisted to uphold bishops And that very inscription, stamped upon the first coins at his coronation, a naked sword in a hand, with these words, '*Si merear, in me*,' 'Against 'me, if I deserve,' not only manifested the judgment of that state, but seemed also to presage the sentence of divine justice in this event upon his son

In the year 1581, the states of Holland, in a general assembly at the Hague, abjured all obedience and subjection to Philip king of Spain, and in a declaration justify their so doing, for that by his tyrannous government, against faith so many times given and broken, he had lost his right to all the Belgic provinces, that therefore they deposed him, and declared it lawful to choose another in his stead From that time to this, no state or kingdom in the world hath equally prospered but let them remember not to look with an evil and prejudicial eye upon their neighbours walking by the same rule

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For as to this question in hand, what the people

by their just right may do in change of government, or of governor, we see it cleared sufficiently, besides other ample authority, even from the mouths of princes themselves. And surely, they that shall boast, as we do, to be a free nation, and not have in themselves the power to remove or to abolish any governor, supreme or subordinate, with the government itself upon urgent causes, may please their fancy with a ridiculous and painted freedom, fit to cozen babies; but we are indeed under tyranny and servitude, as wanting that power, which is the root and source of all liberty, to dispose and economize in the land which God hath given them, as masters of family in their own house and free inheritance. Without which natural and essential power of a free nation, though bearing high their heads, they can in due esteem be thought no better than slaves and vassals born, in the tenure and occupation of another inheriting lord, whose government, though not illegal or intolerable, hangs over them as a lordly scourge, not as a free government; and therefore to be abrogated.

How much more justly then may they fling off tyranny, or tyrants; who being once deposed can be no more than private men, as subject to the reach of justice and arraignment as any other transgressors? And certainly if men, not to speak of heathen, both wise and religious, have done justice upon tyrants what way they could soonest, how much more mild and humane then is it, to give them fair and open trial, to teach lawless kings,

and all who so much adore them, that not mortal man or his imperious will, but justice, is the only true sovereign and supreme majesty upon earth. Let men cease therefore out of faction and hypocrisy to make outcries and horrid things of things so just and honourable Though perhaps till now no protestant state or kingdom can be alleged to have openly put to death their king, which lately some have written, and imputed to their great glory, much mistaking the matter. It is not, neither ought to be, the glory of a protestant state never to have put their king to death, it is the glory of a protestant king never to have deserved death And if the parliament and military council do what they do without precedent, if it appear their duty, it argues the more wisdom, virtue, and magnanimity, that they know themselves able to be a precedent to others, who perhaps in future ages, if they prove not too degenerate, will look up with honour and aspire toward these exemplary and matchless deeds of their ancestors, as to the highest top of their civil glory and emulation; which heretofore, in the pursuance of fame and foreign dominion, spent itself vaingloriously abroad, but henceforth may learn a better fortitude, to dare execute highest justice on them that shall by force of arms endeavour the oppressing and bereaving of religion and their liberty at home That no unbridled potentate or tyrant, but to his sorrow, for the future may presume such high and irresponsible licence over mankind, to havoc and turn upside

down whole kingdoms of men, as though they were no more in respect of his perverse will than a nation of pismires.

As for the party called presbyterian, of whom I believe very many to be good and faithful Christians, though misled by some of turbulent spirit, I wish them, earnestly and calmly, not to fall off from their first principles, nor to affect rigour and superiority over men not under them; not to compel unforcible things, in religion especially, which if not voluntary becomes a sin, not to assist the clamour and malicious drifts of men whom they themselves have judged to be the worst of men, the obdurate enemies of God and his church: nor to dart against the actions of their brethren, for want of other argument, those wrested laws and scriptures thrown by prelates and malignants against their own sides, which though they hurt not otherwise, yet taken up by them to the condemnation of their own doings give scandal to all men, and discover in themselves either extreme passion or apostacy. Let them not oppose their best friends and associates, who molest them not at all, infringe not the least of their liberties, unless they call it their liberty to bind other men's consciences, but are still seeking to live at peace with them and brotherly accord. Let them beware an old and perfect enemy, who, though he hope by sowing discord to make them his instruments, yet cannot forbear a minute the open threatening of his destined revenge upon them, when they have

served his purposes Let them fear therefore, if they be wise, rather what they have done already than what remains to do, and be warned in time that they put no confidence in princes whom they have provoked, lest they be added to the examples of those that miserably have tasted the event

Stories can inform them how Christiern the Second, king of Denmark, not much above a hundred years past, driven out by his subjects, and received again upon new oaths and conditions, broke through them all to his most bloody revenge; slaying his chief opposers, when he saw his time, both them and their children, invited to a feast for that purpose How Maximilian dealt with those of Bruges, though by mediation of the German princes reconciled to them by solemn and public writings drawn and sealed How the massacre at Paris was the effect of that credulous peace which the French protestants made with Charles IX their king and that the main visible cause which to this day hath saved the Netherlands from utter ruin, was their final not believing the perfidious cruelty which, as a constant maxim of state, hath been used by the Spanish kings on their subjects that have taken arms, and after trusted them, as no latter age but can testify, heretofore in Belgia itself, and this very year in Naples And to conclude with one past exception, though far more ancient, David, whose sanctified prudence might be alone sufficient, not to warrant us only, but to

lived so as might persuade the people they hated covetousness, which, worse than heresy, is idolatry; hated pluralities and all kind of simony; left rambling from benefice to benefice, like ravenous wolves seeking where they may devour the biggest. Of which if some, well and warmly seated from the beginning, be not guilty, 'twere good they held not conversation with such as are. Let them be sorry that, being called to assemble about reforming the church, they fell to progging and soliciting the parliament, though they had renounced the name of priests, for a new settling of their tithes and oblations, and double-lined themselves with spiritual places of commodity beyond the possible discharge of their duty. Let them assemble in consistory with their elders and deacons, according to ancient ecclesiastical rule, to the preserving of church discipline, each in his several charge, and not a pack of clergymen by themselves to belly-cheer in their presumptuous Sion, or to promote designs, abuse and gull the simple laity, and stir up tumult, as the prelates did, for the maintenance of their pride and avarice.

These things if they observe, and wait with patience, no doubt but all things will go well without their importunities or exclamations; and the printed letters which they send subscribed with the ostentation of great characters and little moment, would be more considerable than now they are. But if they be the ministers of mammon instead of Christ, and scandalize his church with

'it, we are as much guilty of religion so violated 'as the oppressors themselves '[1]

'Now a days monarchs pretend always in their 'titles to be kings by the grace of God, but how 'many of them to this end only pretend it, that they 'may reign without control! For to what purpose 'is the grace of God mentioned in the title of kings, 'but that they may acknowledge no superior? In 'the meanwhile God, whose name they use to 'support themselves, they willingly would tread 'under their feet It is therefore a mere cheat 'when they boast to reign by the grace of God '[2] 'Earthly princes depose themselves, while they 'rise against God, yea, they are unworthy to be 'numbered among men rather it behoves us to 'spit upon their heads than to obey them '[3]

'If a sovereign prince endeavour by arms to 'defend transgressors, to subvert those things which 'are taught in the word of God, they who are in 'authority under him ought first to dissuade him; 'if they prevail not, and that he now bears himself 'not as a prince but as an enemy, and seeks to 'violate privileges and rights granted to inferior 'magistrates or commonalties, it is the part of pious 'magistrates, imploring first the assistance of God,

1 'Romanum imperium imo quodque,' &c —Zwinglius, Epist ad Conrad Somium

2 'Hodie monarchæ semper in suis titulis,' &c.—Calvin on Daniel, c iv v 25

3 'Abdicant se terreni principes,' &c —On Dan c vi v 22

'rather to try all ways and means than to betray 'the flock of Christ to such an enemy of God: for 'they also are to this end ordained, that they may 'defend the people of God, and maintain those 'things which are good and just. For to have 'supreme power lessens not the evil committed by 'that power, but makes it the less tolerable by how 'much the more generally hurtful. Then certainly, 'the less tolerable, the more unpardonably to be 'punished.'[1] Of Peter Martyr we have spoke before. 'They whose part it is to set up magistrates, 'may restrain them also from outrageous deeds, or 'pull them down; but all magistrates are set up 'either by parliament or by electors, or by other 'magistrates; they, therefore, who exalted them 'may lawfully degrade and punish them.'[2]

Of the Scots divines I need not mention others than the famousest among them, Knox, and his fellow labourers in the reformation of Scotland, whose large treatise on this subject defends the same opinion. To cite them sufficiently, were to insert their whole books, written purposely on this argument, 'Knox's Appeal;' and 'to the reader;' where he promises in a postscript that the book which he intended to set forth, called 'The 'Second Blast of the Trumpet,' should maintain more at large, that the same men most justly may depose and punish him whom unadvisedly they

1 'Si princeps superior,' &c.—Bucer on Matth. c. v.

2 'Quorum est constituere magistratus,' &c.—Paraeus in Rom. xiii.

have elected, notwithstanding birth, succession, or any oath of allegiance Among our own divines, Cartwright and Fenner, two of the learnedest, may in reason satisfy us what was held by the rest Fenner, in his book of Theology, maintaining that they who have power, that is to say, a parliament, may either by fair means or by force depose a tyrant, whom he defines to be him that wilfully breaks all or the principal conditions made between him and the commonwealth.[1] And Cartwright, in a prefixed epistle, testifies his approbation of the whole book

'Kings have their authority of the people, who 'may upon occasion reassume it to themselves'[2] 'The people may kill wicked princes, as monsters 'and cruel beasts'[3] 'When kings or rulers become 'blasphemers of God, oppressors and murderers of 'their subjects, they ought no more to be accounted 'kings, or lawful magistrates, but as private men 'to be examined, accused, and condemned and 'punished by the law of God, and being convicted 'and punished by that law, it is not man's but God's 'doing'[4] 'By the civil laws, a fool or idiot born, 'and so proved, shall lose the lands and inheritance 'whereto he is born, because he is not able to use 'them aright and especially ought in no case be 'suffered to have the government of a whole nation,

1 Fen Sac Theolog c 13
2 Gilby de Obedientiâ, p 25 and 105
3 England's Complaint against the Canons
4 Christopher Goodman of Obedience, c x p 139

'but there is no such evil can come to the common-'wealth by fools and idiots as doth by the rage and 'fury of ungodly rulers, such, therefore, being 'without God, ought to have no authority over 'God's people, who by his word requireth the con-'trary.'[1] 'No person is exempt by any law of 'God from this punishment: be he king, queen, or 'emperor, he must die the death; for God hath not 'placed them above others to transgress his laws as 'they list, but to be subject to them as well as 'others; and if they be subject to his laws, then to 'the punishment also, so much the more as their 'example is more dangerous.'[2] 'When magistrates 'cease to do their duty, the people are, as it were, 'without magistrates, yea, worse, and then God 'giveth the sword into the people's hand, and he 'himself is become immediately their head.'[3] 'If 'princes do right, and keep promise with you, then 'do you owe to them all humble obedience; if not, 'ye are discharged, and your study ought to be in 'this case how ye may depose and punish according 'to the law such rebels against God and oppressors 'of their country.'[4]

This Goodman was a minister of the English church at Geneva, as Dudley Fenner was at Middleburgh, or some other place in that country. These were the pastors of those saints and confessors, who, flying from the bloody persecution of Queen Mary, gathered up at length their scattered

1 Christopher Goodman of Obedience, c. xi p 143, 144
2 C xiii p 184 3 P 185 4 P 190.

members into many congregations, whereof some in Upper, some in Lower Germany, part of them settled at Geneva, where this author having preached on this subject, to the great liking of certain learned and godly men who heard him, was by them sundry times and with much instance required to write more fully on that point. Who thereupon took it in hand, and conferring with the best learned in those parts, (among whom Calvin was then living in the same city,) with their special approbation he published this treatise, aiming principally, as is testified by Whittingham in the Preface, that his brethren of England, the protestants, might be persuaded in the truth of that doctrine concerning obedience to magistrates [1]

These were the true protestant divines of England, our fathers in the faith we hold, this was their sense, who for so many years labouring under prelacy, through all storms and persecutions kept religion from extinguishing; and delivered it pure to us, till there arose a covetous and ambitious generation of divines, (for divines they call themselves) who, feigning on a sudden to be new converts and proselytes from episcopacy, under which they had long temporised, opened their mouths at length, in show against pluralities and prelacy, but with intent to swallow them down both, gorging themselves like harpies on those simonious places and preferments of their outed

[1] Whittingham in Pref.

predecessors, as the quarry for which they hunted, not to plurality only but to multiplicity, for possessing which they had accused them their brethren, and aspiring under another title to the same authority and usurpation over the consciences of all men

Of this faction divers reverend and learned divines (as they are styled in the phylactery of their own title page) pleading the lawfulness of defensive arms against the king, in a treatise called 'Scripture and Reason,' seem in words to disclaim utterly the deposing of a king, but both the scripture, and the reasons which they use, draw consequences after them, which, without their bidding, conclude it lawful. For if by scripture, and by that especially to the Romans, which they most insist upon, kings, doing that which is contrary to St. Paul's definition of a magistrate, may be resisted, they may altogether with as much force of consequence be deposed or punished And if by reason the unjust authority of kings 'may be 'forfeited in part, and his power be reassumed in 'part, either by the parliament or people, for the 'case in hazard and the present necessity,' as they affirm, p 34, there can no scripture be alleged, no imaginable reason given, that necessity continuing, as it may always, and they in all prudence and their duty may take upon them to foresee it, why in such a case they may not finally amerce him with the loss of his kingdom, of whose amendment they have no hope. And if one wicked action persisted

in against religion, laws, and liberties, may warrant us to thus much in part, why may not forty times as many tyrannies, by him committed, warrant us to proceed on restraining him, till the restraint become total? For the ways of justice are exactest proportion, if for one trespass of a king it require so much remedy or satisfaction, then for twenty more as heinous crimes it requires of him twentyfold, and so proportionably, till it come to what is utmost among men If in these proceedings against their king they may not finish, by the usual course of justice, what they have begun, they could not lawfully begin at all For this golden rule of justice and morality, as well as of arithmetic, out of three terms which they admit, will as certainly and unavoidably bring out the fourth as any problem that ever Euclid or Apollonius made good by demonstration

And if the parliament, being undeposable but by themselves, as is affirmed, p 37, 38, might for his whole life, if they saw cause, take all power, authority, and the sword out of his hand, which in effect is to unmagistrate him, why might they not, being then themselves the sole magistrates in force, proceed to punish him, who, being lawfully deprived of all things that define a magistrate, can be now no magistrate to be degraded lower, but an offender to be punished? Lastly, whom they may defy, and meet in battle, why may they not as well prosecute by justice? For lawful war is but the execution of justice against them who refuse law

Among whom if it be lawful (as they deny not, p. 19, 20,) to slay the king himself coming in front at his own peril, wherefore may not justice do that intendedly, which the chance of a defensive war might without blame have done casually, nay, purposely, if there it find him among the rest? They ask, p. 19, 'By what rule of conscience or 'God a state is bound to sacrifice religion, laws, 'and liberties, rather than a prince defending such 'as subvert them, should come in hazard of his 'life.' And I ask by what conscience, or divinity, or law, *or reason*, a state is bound to leave all these sacred concernments under a perpetual hazard and extremity of danger, rather than cut off a wicked prince, who sits plotting day and night to subvert them.

They tell us that the law of nature justifies any man to defend himself, even against the king in person: let them shew us then why the same law may not justify much more a state or whole people to do justice upon him against whom each private man may lawfully defend himself; seeing all kind of justice done is a defence to good men, as well as a punishment to bad; and justice done upon a tyrant is no more but the necessary self-defence of a whole commonwealth. To war upon a king that his instruments may be brought to condign punishment, and thereafter to punish them the instruments, and not to spare only, but to defend and honour him the author, is the strangest piece of justice to be called Christian, and the strangest

piece of reason to be called human, that by men of reverence and learning, as their style imports them, ever yet was vented They maintain in the third and fourth section, that a judge or inferior magistrate is anointed of God, is his minister, hath the sword in his hand, is to be obeyed by St. Peter's rule, as well as the supreme, and without difference anywhere expressed and yet will have us fight against the supreme till he remove and punish the inferior magistrate, (for such were greatest delinquents,) whereas by scripture, and by reason, there can no more authority be shewn to resist the one than the other, and altogether as much, to punish or depose the supreme himself, as to make war upon him, till he punish or deliver up his inferior magistrates, whom in the same terms we are commanded to obey, and not to resist

Thus while they, in a cautious line or two here and there stuffed in, are only verbal against the pulling down or punishing of tyrants, all the scripture and the reason which they bring, is in every leaf direct and rational, to infer it altogether as lawful, as to resist them. And yet in all their sermons, as hath by others been well noted, they went much further. For divines, if ye observe them, have their postures and their motions no less expertly, and with no less variety, than they that practise feats in the Artillery-ground. Sometimes they seem furiously to march on, and presently march counter, by and by they stand, and then retreat, or if need be, can face about, or wheel in

a whole body, with that cunning and dexterity as is almost imperceivable, to wind themselves by shifting ground into places of more advantage And providence only must be the drum, providence the word of command, that calls them from above, but always to some larger benefice, or acts them into such or such figures and promotions At their turns and doublings no men readier, to the right, or to the left, for it is their turns which they serve chiefly; herein only singular, that with them there is no certain hand right or left, but as their own commodity thinks best to call it But if there come a truth to be defended, which to them and their interest of this world seems not so profitable, straight these nimble motionists can find not even legs to stand upon; and are no more of use to reformation thoroughly performed, and not superficially, or to the advancement of truth, (which among mortal men is always in her progress,) than if on a sudden they were struck maim and crippled Which the better to conceal, or the more to countenance by a general conformity to their own limping, they would have scripture, they would have reason also made to halt with them for company; and would put us off with impotent conclusions, lame and shorter than the premises

In this posture they seem to stand with great zeal and confidence on the wall of Sion; but like Jebusites, not like Israelites, or Levites · blind also as well as lame, they discern not David from Adonibezec but cry him up for the Lord's anointed, whose thumbs and great toes not long

before they had cut off upon their pulpit cushions Therefore he who is our only King, the Root of David, and whose kingdom is eternal righteousness, with all those that war under him, whose happiness and final hopes are laid up in that only just and rightful kingdom, (which we pray incessantly may come soon, and in so praying wish hasty ruin and destruction to all tyrants,) even he our immortal King, and all that love him, must of necessity have in abomination these blind and lame defenders of Jerusalem, as the soul of David hated them, and forbid them entrance into God's house, and his own But as to those before them, which I cited first (and with an easy search, for many more might be added) as they there stand, without more in number, being the best and chief of protestant divines, we may follow them for faithful guides, and without doubting may receive them, as witnesses abundant of what we here affirm concerning tyrants And indeed I find it generally the clear and positive determination of them all, (not prelatical, or of this late faction subprelatical,) who have written on this argument, that to do justice on a lawless king is to a private man unlawful, to an inferior magistrate lawful or if they were divided in opinion, yet greater than these here alleged, or of more authority in the church, there can be none produced

If any one shall go about, by bringing other testimonies to disable these, or by bringing these against themselves in other cited passages of their books, he will not only fail to make good that false

and impudent assertion of those mutinous ministers, that the deposing and punishing of a king or tyrant 'is against the constant judgment of all protestant 'divines,' it being quite the contrary; but will prove rather what perhaps he intended not, that the judgment of divines, if it be so various and inconstant to itself, is not considerable, or to be esteemed at all Ere which be yielded, as I hope it never will, these ignorant assertors in their own art will have proved themselves more and more not to be protestant divines, whose constant judgment in this point they have so audaciously belied, but rather to be a pack of hungry church-wolves, who in the steps of Simon Magus their father, following the hot scent of double livings and pluralities, advowsons, donatives, inductions, and augmentations, though uncalled to the flock of Christ, but by the mere suggestion of their bellies, like those priests of Bel whose pranks Daniel found out, have got possesion or rather seized upon the pulpit, as the stronghold and fortress of their sedition and rebellion against the civil magistrate. Whose friendly and victorious hand having rescued them from the bishops, their insulting lords, fed them plenteously both in public and in private, raised them to be high and rich of poor and base, only suffered not their covetousness and fierce ambition (which as the pit that sent out their fellow-locusts hath been ever bottomless and boundless) to interpose in all things, and over all persons, their impetuous ignorance and importunity

EIKONOKLASTES

IN ANSWER TO A BOOK ENTITLED 'EIKON BASILIKE, THE PORTRAITURE OF HIS SACRED MAJESTY IN HIS SOLITUDES AND SUFFERINGS' PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY (1649).

'As a roaring lion and a ranging bear, so is a wicked ruler 'over the poor people

'The prince that wanteth understanding is also a great 'oppressor, but he that hateth covetousness shall 'prolong his days

'A man that doth violence to the blood of any person 'shall flee to the pit, let no man stay him —PROV xxviii 15, 16, 17

'Regium imperium, quod initio conservandæ libertatis 'atque augendæ reipublicæ causa fuerat, in superbiam 'dominationemque se convertit

'Regibus boni quam mali suspectiores sunt, semperque 'his aliena virtus formidolosa est.

'Impune quælibet facere, id est regem esse '—SALLUST

The following extract is the second of twenty-eight chapters in which 'Eikon Basilike' is reviewed in detail

EIKONOKLASTES

THIS next chapter is a penitent confession of the king, and the strangest, if it be well weighed, that ever was auricular. For he repents here of giving his consent, though most unwillingly, to the most seasonable and solemn piece of justice that had been done of many years in the land but his sole conscience thought the contrary. And thus was the welfare, the safety, and, within a little, the unanimous demand of three populous nations, to have attended still on the singularity of one man's opinionated conscience, if men had always been so tame and spiritless, and had not unexpectedly found the grace to understand that if his conscience were so narrow and peculiar to itself it was not fit his authority should be so ample and universal over others for certainly a private conscience sorts not with a public calling, but declares that person rather meant by nature for a private fortune. And this also we may take for truth, that he whose conscience thinks it sin to put to death a capital offender, will as oft think it meritorious to kill a righteous person.

But let us hear what the sin was that lay so sore

upon him and, as one of his prayers given to Dr. Juxon testifies, to the very day of his death, it was his signing the bill of Strafford's execution, a man whom all men looked upon as one of the boldest and most impetuous instruments that the king had to advance any violent or illegal design. He had ruled Ireland, and some parts of England, in an arbitrary manner; had endeavoured to subvert fundamental laws, to subvert parliaments, and to incense the king against them, he had also endeavoured to make hostility between England and Scotland he had counselled the king to call over that Irish army of papists, which he had cunningly raised, to reduce England, as appeared by good testimony then present at the consultation. for which and many other crimes alleged and proved against him in twenty eight articles, he was condemned of high-treason by the parliament.

The commons by far the greater number cast him: the lords, after they had been satisfied in a full discourse by the king's solicitor, and the opinions of many judges delivered in their house, agreed likewise to the sentence of treason. The people universally cried out for justice None were his friends but courtiers and clergymen, the worst, at that time, and most corrupted sort of men, and court ladies, not the best of women, who when they grow to that insolence as to appear active in state affairs, are the certain sign of a dissolute, degenerate, and pusillanimous commonwealth Last of all, the king, or rather first, for these

were but his apes, was not satisfied in conscience to condemn him of high-treason, and declared to both houses 'that no fears or respects whatsoever 'should make him alter that resolution founded 'upon his conscience.' Either then his resolution was indeed not founded upon his conscience, or his conscience received better information, or else both his conscience and this his strong resolution struck sail, notwithstanding these glorious words, to his stronger fear; for within a few days after, when the judges, at a privy-council, and four of his elected bishops had picked the thorn out of his conscience, he was at length persuaded to sign the bill for Strafford's execution. And yet perhaps that it wrung his conscience to condemn the earl of high treason is not unlikely, not because he thought him guiltless of highest treason, had half those crimes been committed against his own private interest or person, as appeared plainly by his charge against the six members, but because he knew himself a principal in what the earl was but his accessory, and thought nothing treason against the commonwealth, but against himself only.

Had he really scrupled to sentence that for treason which he thought not treasonable, why did he seem resolved by the judges and the bishops? and if by them resolved, how comes the scruple here again? It was not then, as he now pretends, 'the importunities of some, and the fear of many,' which made him sign, but the satisfaction given him by those judges and ghostly fathers of his own

choosing Which of him shall we believe? for he seems not one, but double, either here we must not believe him professing that his satisfaction was but seemingly received and out of fear, or else we may as well believe that the scruple was no real scruple as we can believe him here against himself before, that the satisfaction then received was no real satisfaction Of such a variable and fleeting conscience what hold can be taken?

But that indeed it was a facile conscience, and could dissemble satisfaction when it pleased, his own ensuing actions declared, being soon after found to have the chief hand in a most detested conspiracy against the parliament and kingdom, as by letters and examinations of Percy, Goring, and other conspirators came to light, that his intention was to rescue the Earl of Strafford, by seizing on the Tower of London, to bring up the English army out of the North, joined with eight thousand Irish papists raised by Strafford, and a French army to be landed at Portsmouth, against the parliament and their friends For which purpose the king, though requested by both houses to disband those Irish papists, refused to do it, and kept them still in arms to his own purposes No marvel then if being as deeply criminous as the earl himself it stung his conscience to adjudge to death those misdeeds whereof himself had been the chief author no marvel though instead of blaming and detesting his ambition, his evil counsel, his violence, and oppression of the people, he fall to praise his

great abilities; and with scholastic flourishes, beneath the decency of a king, compares him to the sun, which in all figurative use and significance bears allusion to a king, not to a subject no marvel though he knit contradictions as close as words can lie together, 'not approving in his 'judgment,' and yet approving in his subsequent reason all that Strafford did, as 'driven by the 'necessity of times, and the temper of that people,' for this excuses all his misdemeanors Lastly, no marvel that he goes on building many fair and pious conclusions upon false and wicked premises, which deceive the common reader, not well discerning the antipathy of such connexions but this is the marvel, and may be the astonishment, of all that have a conscience, how he durst in the sight of God (and with the same words of contrition wherewith David repents the murdering of Uriah) repent his lawful compliance to that just act of not saving him whom he ought to have delivered up to speedy punishment, though himself the guiltier of the two

If the deed were so sinful, to have put to death so great a malefactor, it would have taken much doubtless from the heaviness of his sin, to have told God in his confession how he laboured, what dark plots he had contrived, into what a league entered, and with what conspirators, against his parliament and kingdoms, to have rescued from the claim of justice so notable and so dear an instrument of tyranny, which would have been a

story, no doubt, as pleasing in the ears of heaven as all these equivocal repentances. For it was fear, and nothing else, which made him feign before both the scruple and the satisfaction of his conscience, that is to say, of his mind: his first fear pretended conscience, that he might be borne with to refuse signing; his latter fear, being more urgent, made him find a conscience both to sign and to be satisfied. As for repentance, it came not on him till a long time after; when he saw 'he could have suffered nothing more, though he had denied that bill.' For how could he understandingly repent of letting that be treason which the parliament and whole nation so judged? This was that which repented him, to have given up to just punishment so stout a champion of his designs, who might have been so useful to him in his following civil broils. It was a worldly repentance, not a conscientious; or else it was a strange tyranny which his conscience had got over him, to vex him like an evil spirit for doing one act of justice, and by that means to 'fortify his resolution' from ever doing so any more. That mind must needs be irrecoverably depraved, which either by chance or importunity tasting but once of one just deed, spatters at it, and abhors the relish ever after.

To the Scribes and Pharisees woe was denounced by our Saviour, for straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel, though a gnat were to be strained at: but to a conscience with whom one good is so hard to pass down as to endanger almost a choking,

and bad deeds without number, though as big and bulky as the ruin of three kingdoms, go down currently without straining, certainly a far greater woe appertains. If his conscience were come to that unnatural dyscrasy, as to digest poison and to keck at wholesome food, it was not for the parliament or any of his kingdoms to feed with him any longer. Which to conceal he would persuade us that the parliament also in their conscience escaped not 'some touches of remorse,' for putting Strafford to death, in forbidding it by an after-act to be a precedent for the future. But, in a fairer construction, that act implied rather a desire in them to pacify the king's mind, whom they perceived by this means quite alienated: in the meanwhile not imagining that this after-act should be retorted on them to tie up justice for the time to come upon like occasion, whether this were made a precedent or not, no more than the want of such a precedent, if it had been wanting, had been available to hinder this.

But how likely is it that this after-act argued in the parliament their least repenting for the death of Strafford, when it argued so little in the king himself, who, notwithstanding this after act, which had his own hand and concurrence, if not his own instigation, within the same year accused of high-treason no less than six members at once for the same pretended crimes which his conscience would not yield to think treasonable in the earl? So that this his subtle argument to fasten a repenting and,

by that means a guiltiness of Strafford's death upon the parliament, concludes upon his own head, and shows us plainly that either nothing in his judgment was treason against the commonwealth, but only against the king's person, (a tyrannical principle), or that his conscience was a perverse and prevaricating conscience, to scruple that the commonwealth should punish for treasonous in one eminent offender that which he himself sought so vehemently to have punished in six guiltless persons If this were 'that touch of conscience, which he bore with greater regret' than for any sin committed in his life, whether it were that proditory aid sent to Rochelle and religion abroad, or that prodigality of shedding blood at home, to a million of his subjects' lives not valued in comparison to one Strafford, we may consider yet at last, what true sense and feeling could be in that conscience, and what fitness to be the master-conscience of three kingdoms

But the reason why he labours that we should take notice of so much 'tenderness and regret in 'his soul for having any hand in Strafford's death,' is worth the marking ere we conclude 'he hoped 'it would be some evidence before God and man to 'all posterity, that he was far from bearing that 'vast load and guilt of blood' laid upon him by others which hath the likeness of a subtle dissimulation, bewailing the blood of one man, his commodious instrument, put to death most justly, though by him unwillingly, that we might think

him too tender to shed willingly the blood of those thousands whom he counted rebels And thus by dipping voluntarily his finger's end, yet with show of great remorse, in the blood of Strafford, whereof all men clear him, he thinks to scape that sea of innocent blood, wherein his own guilt inevitably hath plunged him all over And we may well perceive to what easy satisfactions and purgations he had inured his secret conscience, who thought by such weak policies and ostentations as these to gain belief and absolution from understanding men.

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THE READY AND EASY WAY TO ESTABLISH A FREE COMMONWEALTH

AND THE EXCELLENCE THEREOF, COMPARED WITH THE INCONVENIENCES AND DANGERS OF READMITTING KINGSHIP IN THIS NATION (1660)

Et nos
Consilium dedimus Sullæ, demus populo nunc

THE READY AND EASY WAY TO ESTABLISH A FREE COMMONWEALTH.

ALTHOUGH since the writing of this treatise the face of things hath had some change, writs for new elections have been recalled, and the members at first chosen re admitted from exclusion; yet not a little rejoicing to hear declared the resolution of those who are in power, tending to the establishment of a free commonwealth, and to remove, if it be possible, this noxious humour of returning to bondage, instilled of late by some deceivers, and nourished from bad principles and false apprehensions among too many of the people; I thought best not to suppress what I had written, hoping that it may now be of much more use and concernment to be freely published, in the midst of our elections to a free parliament, or their sitting to consider freely of the government, whom it behoves to have all things represented to them that may direct their judgment therein; and I never read of any state, scarce of any tyrant, grown so incurable as to refuse counsel from any

measure wisdom working all things, and the dangers on either side they seriously thus weighed: From the treaty, short fruits of long labours, and seven years' war, security for twenty years, if we can hold it, reformation in the church for three years: then put to shift again with our vanquished master. His justice, his honour, his conscience declared quite contrary to ours, which would have furnished him with many such evasions as in a book entitled 'An Inquisition for Blood' soon after were not concealed: bishops not totally removed, but left, as it were, in ambush, a reserve, with ordination in their sole power; their lands already sold, not to be alienated, but rented, and the sale of them called 'sacrilege,' delinquents, few of many brought to condign punishment, accessories punished, the chief author above pardon, though after utmost resistance vanquished, not to give, but to receive, laws, yet besought, treated with, and to be thanked for his gracious concessions, to be honoured, worshipped, glorified.

If this we swore to do, with what righteousness in the sight of God, with what assurance that we bring not by such an oath the whole sea of blood-guiltiness upon our heads? If on the other side we prefer a free government, though for the present not obtained, yet all those suggested fears and difficulties, as the event will prove, easily overcome, we remain finally secure from the exasperated regal power, and out of snares, shall retain the best part of our liberty, which is our religion, and the

civil part will be from these who defer us much more easily recovered, being neither so subtle nor so awful as a king reinthroned. Nor were their actions less both at home and abroad than might become the hopes of a glorious rising commonwealth: nor were the expressions both of army and people, whether in their public declarations or several writings, other than such as testified a spirit in this nation no less noble and well-fitted to the liberty of a commonwealth than in the ancient Greeks or Romans. Nor was the heroic cause unsuccessfully defended to all Christendom, against the tongue of a famous and thought invincible adversary; nor the constancy and fortitude that so nobly vindicated our liberty, our victory at once against two the most prevailing usurpers over mankind, superstition and tyranny, unpraised or uncelebrated in a written monument, likely to outlive detraction, as it hath hitherto convinced or silenced not a few of our detractors, especially in parts abroad.

After our liberty and religion thus prosperously fought for, gained, and many years possessed, except in those unhappy interruptions which God hath removed, now that nothing remains but in all reason the certain hopes of a speedy and immediate settlement for ever in a firm and free commonwealth, for this extolled and magnified nation, regardless both of honour won or deliverances vouchsafed from heaven, to fall back, or rather to creep back, so poorly as it seems the

multitude would, to their once abjured and detested thraldom of kingship, to be ourselves the slanderers *of our own just and religious deeds, though done* by some to covetous and ambitious ends, yet not therefore to be stained with their infamy, or they to asperse the integrity of others, and yet these now by revolting from the conscience of deeds well done, both in church and state, to throw away and forsake, or rather to betray a just and noble cause for the mixture of bad men who have ill-managed and abused it, (which had our fathers done heretofore, and on the same pretence deserted true religion, what had long ere this become of our gospel, and all protestant reformation so much intermixed with the avarice and ambition of some reformers?) and by thus relapsing to verify all the bitter predictions of our triumphing enemies, who will now think they wisely discerned and justly censured both us and all our actions as rash, rebellious, hypocritical, and impious, not only argues a strange degenerate contagion suddenly spread among us, fitted and prepared for new slavery, but will render us a scorn and derision to all our neighbours

And what will they at best say of us, and of the whole English name, but scoffingly, as of that foolish builder mentioned by our Saviour, who began to build a tower, and was not able to finish it? Where is this goodly tower of a common-wealth, which the English boasted they would build to overshadow kings, and be another Rome

in the west? The foundation indeed they laid gallantly, but fell into a worse confusion, not of tongues but of factions, than those at the tower of Babel, and have left no memorial of their work behind them remaining but in the common laughter of Europe. Which must needs redound the more to our shame, if we but look on our neighbours the United Provinces, to us inferior in all outward advantages, who notwithstanding, in the midst of greater difficulties, courageously, wisely, constantly went through with the same work, and are settled in all the happy enjoyments of a potent and flourishing republic to this day.

Besides this, if we return to kingship, and soon repent, (as undoubtedly we shall, when we begin to find the old encroachment coming on by little and little upon our consciences, which must necessarily proceed from king and bishop united inseparably in one interest,) we may be forced perhaps to fight over again all that we have fought, and spend over again all that we have spent, but are never like to attain thus far as we are now advanced to the recovery of our freedom, never to have it in possession as we now have it, never to be vouchsafed hereafter the like mercies and signal assistances from Heaven in our cause, if by our ingrateful backsliding we make these fruitless; flying now to regal concessions from his divine condescensions and gracious answers to our once importuning prayers against the tyranny which we then groaned under; making vain and viler than

'let him be as the younger, and he that is chief, as 'he that serveth' The occasion of these his words was the ambitious desire of Zebedee's two sons to be exalted above their brethren in his kingdom, which they thought was to be ere long upon earth That he speaks of civil government, is manifest by the former part of the comparison, which infers the other part to be always in the same kind And what government comes nearer to this precept of Christ, than a free commonwealth; wherein they who are the greatest, are perpetual servants and drudges to the public at their own cost and charges, neglect their own affairs, yet are not elevated above their brethren, live soberly in their families, walk the street as other men, may be spoken to freely, familiarly, friendly, without adoration? Whereas a king must be adored like a demigod, with a dissolute and haughty court about him, of vast expense and luxury, masks and revels, to the debauching of our prime gentry, both male and female, not in their pastimes only but in earnest, by the loose employments of court-service which will be then thought honourable

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It may be well wondered that any nation, styling themselves free, can suffer any man to pretend hereditary right over them as their lord, whereas, by acknowledging that right, they conclude themselves his servants and his vassals, and so renounce their own freedom. Which how a people and their leaders especially can do, who have

fought so gloriously for liberty; how they can change their noble words and actions, heretofore so becoming the majesty of a free people, into the base necessity of court flatteries and prostrations, is not only strange and admirable, but lamentable to think on That a nation should be so valorous and courageous to win their liberty in the field, and when they have won it, should be so heartless and unwise in their counsels as not to know how to use it, value it, what to do with it, or with themselves, but after ten or twelve years' prosperous war and contestation with tyranny, basely and besottedly to run their necks again into the yoke which they have broken, and prostrate all the fruits of their victory for nought at the feet of the vanquished, besides our loss of glory, and such an example as kings or tyrants never yet had the like to boast of, will be an ignominy, if it befall us, that never yet befell any nation possessed of their liberty; worthy indeed themselves, whatsoever they be, to be for ever slaves, but that part of the nation which consents not with them, as I persuade me of a great number, far worthier than by their means to be brought into the same bondage

Considering these things so plain, so rational, I cannot but yet further admire on the other side how any man who hath the true principles of justice and religion in him can presume or take upon him to be a king and lord over his brethren, whom he cannot but know, whether as men or Christians, to be for the most part every way equal or superior

to himself how he can display with such vanity and ostentation his regal splendour so supereminently above other mortal men, or, being a Christian, can assume such extraordinary honour and worship to himself, while the kingdom of Christ, our common king and lord, is hid to this world, and such gentilish imitation forbid in express words by himself to all his disciples All protestants hold that Christ in his church hath left no vicegerent of his power, but himself, without deputy, is the only head thereof governing it from heaven how then can any Christian man derive his kingship from Christ, but with worse usurpation than the pope his headship over the church, since Christ not only hath not left the least shadow of a command for any such vicegerence from him in the state, as the pope pretends for his in the church, but hath expressly declared that such regal dominion is from the gentiles, not from him, and hath strictly charged us not to imitate them therein?

I doubt not but all ingenuous and knowing men will easily agree with me, that a free commonwealth without single person or house of lords is by far the best government, if it can be had, but we have all this while, say they, been expecting it, and cannot yet attain it It is true, indeed, when monarchy was dissolved, the form of a commonwealth should have forthwith been framed, and the practice thereof immediately begun, that the people might have soon been satisfied and delighted with the decent order, ease, and benefit

thereof; we had been then by this time firmly rooted, past fear of commotions or mutations, and now flourishing; this care of timely settling a new government instead of the old, too much neglected, hath been our mischief. Yet the cause thereof may be ascribed with most reason to the frequent disturbances, interruptions, and dissolutions, which the parliament hath had, partly from the impatient or disaffected people, partly from some ambitious leaders in the army, much contrary, I believe, to the mind and approbation of the army itself, and their other commanders, once undeceived, or in their own power

Now is the opportunity, now the very season, wherein we may obtain a free commonwealth, and establish it for ever in the land, without difficulty or much delay. Writs are sent out for elections, and, which is worth observing, in the name, not of any king, but of the keepers of our liberty, to summon a free parliament; which then only will indeed be free, and deserve the true honour of that supreme title, if they preserve us a free people Which never parliament was more free to do, being now called not as heretofore, by the summons of a king, but by the voice of liberty And if the people, laying aside prejudice and impatience, will seriously and calmly now consider their own good, both religious and civil, their own liberty and the only means thereof, as shall be here laid down before them, and will elect their knights and burgesses able men, and according to the just and

necessary qualifications, (which, for aught I hear, remain yet in force unrepealed, as they were formerly decreed in parliament,) men not addicted to a single person or house of lords, the work is done, at least the foundation firmly laid of a free commonwealth, and good part also erected of the main structure For the ground and basis of every just and free government, (since men have smarted so oft for committing all to one person,) is a general council of ablest men, chosen by the people to consult of public affairs from time to time for the common good In this grand council must the sovereignty, not transferred, but delegated only, and as it were deposited, reside, with this caution, they must have the forces by sea and land committed to them for preservation of the common peace and liberty, must raise and manage the public revenue, at least with some inspectors deputed for satisfaction of the people, how it is employed; must make or propose, as more expressly shall be said anon, civil laws, treat of commerce, peace or war with foreign nations, and, for the carrying on some particular affairs with more secrecy and expedition, must elect, as they have already out of their own number and others, a council of state

And, although it may seem strange at first hearing, by reason that men's minds are prepossessed with the notion of successive parliaments, I affirm that the grand or general council, being well chosen, should be perpetual for so their business

is or may be, and oftimes urgent; the opportunity of affairs gained or lost in a moment. The day of council cannot be set as the day of a festival; but must be ready always to prevent or answer all occasions By this continuance they will become every way skilfullest, best provided of intelligence from abroad, best acquainted with the people at home, and the people with them The ship of the commonwealth is always under sail; they sit at the stern, and if they steer well, what need is there to change them, it being rather dangerous? Add to this, that the grand council is both foundation and main pillar of the whole state, and to move pillars and foundations, not faulty, cannot be safe for the building

I see not, therefore, how we can be advantaged by successive and transitory parliaments, but that they are much likelier continually to unsettle rather than to settle a free government, to breed commotions, changes, novelties, and uncertainties, to bring neglect upon present affairs and opportunities, while all minds are in suspense with expectation of a new assembly, and the assembly, for a good space, taken up with the new settling of itself. After which, if they find no great work to do, they will make it, by altering or repealing former acts, or making and multiplying new, that they may seem to see what their predecessors saw not, and not to have assembled for nothing, till all law be lost in the multitude of clashing statutes But if the ambition of such as think themselves

injured that they also partake not of the government, and are impatient till they be chosen, cannot brook the perpetuity of others chosen before them, or if it be feared, that long continuance of power may corrupt sincerest men, the known expedient is, and by some lately propounded, that annually (or if the space be longer, so much perhaps the better) the third part of senators may go out according to the precedence of their election, and the like number be chosen in their places, to prevent their settling of too absolute a power, if it should be perpetual and this they call 'partial 'rotation'

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Having thus far shewn with what ease we may now obtain a free commonwealth, and by it, with as much ease, all the freedom, peace, justice, plenty, that we can desire; on the other side, the difficulties, troubles, uncertainties, nay rather impossibilities, to enjoy these things constantly under a monarch; I will now proceed to show more particularly wherein our freedom and flourishing condition will be more ample and secure to us under a free commonwealth than under kingship

The whole freedom of man consists either in spiritual or civil liberty As for spiritual, who can be at rest, who can enjoy anything in this world with contentment, who hath not liberty to serve God, and to save his own soul, according to the best light which God hath planted in him to

that purpose, by the reading of his revealed will, and the guidance of his Holy Spirit? That this is best pleasing to God, and that the whole protestant church allows no supreme judge or rule in matters of religion, but the Scriptures, and these to be interpreted by the Scriptures themselves, which necessarily infers liberty of conscience, I have heretofore proved at large in another treatise, and might yet further, by the public declarations, confessions, and admonitions of whole churches and states, obvious in all histories since the reformation

This liberty of conscience, which above all other things ought to be to all men dearest and most precious, no government more inclinable not to favour only, but to protect, than a free commonwealth, as being most magnanimous, most fearless, and confident of its own fair proceedings Whereas kingship, though looking big, yet indeed most pusillanimous, full of fears, full of jealousies, startled at every umbrage, as it hath been observed of old to have ever suspected most and mistrusted them who were in most esteem for virtue and generosity of mind, so it is now known to have most in doubt and suspicion them who are most reputed to be religious Queen Elizabeth, though herself accounted so good a protestant, so moderate, so confident of her subjects' love, would never give way so much as to presbyterian reformation in this land, though once and again besought, as Camden relates, but imprisoned and persecuted

the very proposers thereof, alleging it as her mind and maxim unalterable, that such reformation would diminish regal authority

What liberty of conscience can we then expect of others, far worse principled from the cradle, trained up and governed by popish and Spanish counsels, and on such depending hitherto for subsistence? Especially what can this last parliament expect, who having revived lately and published the covenant, have re-engaged themselves never to readmit episcopacy? Which no son of Charles returning but will most certainly bring back with him, if he regard the last and strictest charge of his father, 'to persevere in not the doctrine only 'but government of the church of England, not to 'neglect the speedy and effectual suppressing of 'errors and schisms,' among which he accounted presbytery one of the chief

Or if, notwithstanding that charge of his father, he submit to the covenant, how will he keep faith to us, with disobedience to him, or regard that faith given, which must be founded on the breach of that last and solemnest paternal charge, and the reluctance, I may say the antipathy, which is in all kings, against presbyterian and independent discipline? For they hear the gospel speaking much of liberty, a word which monarchy and her bishops both fear and hate, but a free commonwealth both favours and promotes, and not the word only, but the thing itself But let our governors beware in time, lest their hard measure to liberty of conscience

They should have here also schools and academies at their own choice, wherein their children may be bred up in their own sight to all learning and noble education, not in grammar only, but in all liberal arts and exercises This would soon spread much more knowledge and civility, yea, religion, through all parts of the land, by communicating the natural heat of government and culture more distributively to all extreme parts, which now lie numb and neglected, would soon make the whole nation more industrious, more ingenious at home, more potent, more honourable abroad To this a free commonwealth will easily assent, (nay, the parliament hath had already some such thing in design,) for of all governments a commonwealth aims most to make the people flourishing, virtuous, noble, and high-spirited Monarchs will never permit, whose aim is to make the people wealthy indeed perhaps, and well fleeced, for their own shearing, and the supply of regal prodigality, but otherwise softest, basest, viciousest, servilest, easiest to be kept under And not only in fleece, but in mind also sheepishest, and will have all the benches of judicature annexed to the throne, as a gift of royal grace that we have justice done us; whenas nothing can be more essential to the freedom of a people, than to have the administration of justice, and all public ornaments, in their own election, and within their own bounds, without long travelling or depending upon remote places to obtain their right, or any civil accomplishment; so it be not supreme, but subor-

dinate to the general power and union of the whole republic

In which happy firmness, as in the particular above-mentioned, we shall also far exceed the United Provinces, by having not as they, (to the retarding and distracting ofttimes of their counsels or urgentest occasions,) many sovereignties united in one commonwealth, but many commonwealths under one united and intrusted sovereignty. And when we have our forces by sea and land, either of a faithful army or a settled militia, in our own hands, to the firm establishing of a free commonwealth, public accounts under our own inspection, general laws and taxes, with their causes, in our own domestic suffrages, judicial laws, offices, and ornaments at home in our own ordering and administration, all distinction of lords and commoners, that may any way divide or sever the public interest, removed, what can a perpetual senate have then wherein to grow corrupt, wherein to encroach upon us, or usurp? Or if they do, wherein to be formidable? Yet if all this avail not to remove the fear or envy of a perpetual sitting, it may be easily provided to change a third part of them yearly, or every two or three years, as was above mentioned or that it be at those times in the people's choice, whether they will change them, or renew their power, as they shall find cause

I have no more to say at present. few words will save us, well considered; few and easy things,

now seasonably done But if the people be so affected as to prostitute religion and liberty to the vain and groundless apprehension that nothing but kingship can restore trade, not remembering the frequent plagues and pestilences that then wasted this city, such as through God's mercy we never have felt since, and that trade flourishes nowhere more than in the free commonwealths of Italy, Germany, and the Low Countries, before their eyes at this day; yet if trade be grown so craving and importunate through the profuse living of tradesmen that nothing can support it but the luxurious expenses of a nation upon trifles or superfluities; so as if the people generally should betake themselves to frugality, it might prove a dangerous matter, lest tradesmen should mutiny for want of trading, and that therefore we must forego and set to sale religion, liberty, honour, safety, all concernments divine or human, to keep up trading if, lastly, after all this light among us, the same reason shall pass for current, to put our necks again under kingship, as was made use of by the Jews to return back to Egypt, and to the worship of their idol queen, because they falsely imagined that they then lived in more plenty and prosperity, our condition is not sound, but rotten, both in religion and all civil prudence, and will bring us soon, the way we are marching, to those calamities which attend always and unavoidably on luxury, all national judgments under foreign and domestic slavery so far we shall be from

mending our condition by monarchizing our government, whatever new conceit now possesses us

However, with all hazard I have ventured what I thought my duty to speak in season, and to forewarn my country in time, wherein I doubt not but there be many wise men in all places and degrees, but am sorry the effects of wisdom are so little seen among us Many circumstances and particulars I could have added in those things whereof I have spoken but a few main matters now put speedily in execution will suffice to recover us, and set all right and there will want at no time who are good at circumstances, but men who set their minds on main matters, and sufficiently urge them, in these most difficult times I find not many

What I have spoken, is the language of that which is not called amiss 'The good old Cause' if it seem strange to any, it will not seem more strange, I hope, than convincing to backsliders Thus much I should perhaps have said, though I was sure I should have spoken only to trees and stones, and had none to cry to, but with the prophet, 'O earth, earth, earth!' to tell the very soil itself, what her perverse inhabitants are deaf to Nay, though what I have spoke should happen (which thou suffer not, who didst create mankind free! nor thou next, who didst redeem us from being servants of men!) to be the last words of our expiring liberty But I trust I shall have spoken persuasion to abundance of sensible and ingenuous men; to some, perhaps, whom God

may raise from these stones to become children of reviving liberty, and may reclaim, though they seem now choosing them a captain back for Egypt, to bethink themselves a little, and consider whither they are rushing, to exhort this torrent also of the people not to be so impetuous, but to keep their due channel, and at length recovering and uniting their better resolutions, now that they see already how open and unbounded the insolence and rage is of our common enemies, to stay these ruinous proceedings, justly and timely fearing to what a precipice of destruction the deluge of this epidemic madness would hurry us, through the general defection of a misguided and abused multitude

CHISWICK PRESS —C WHITTINGHAM AND CO, TOOKS
COURT, CHANCERY LANE.